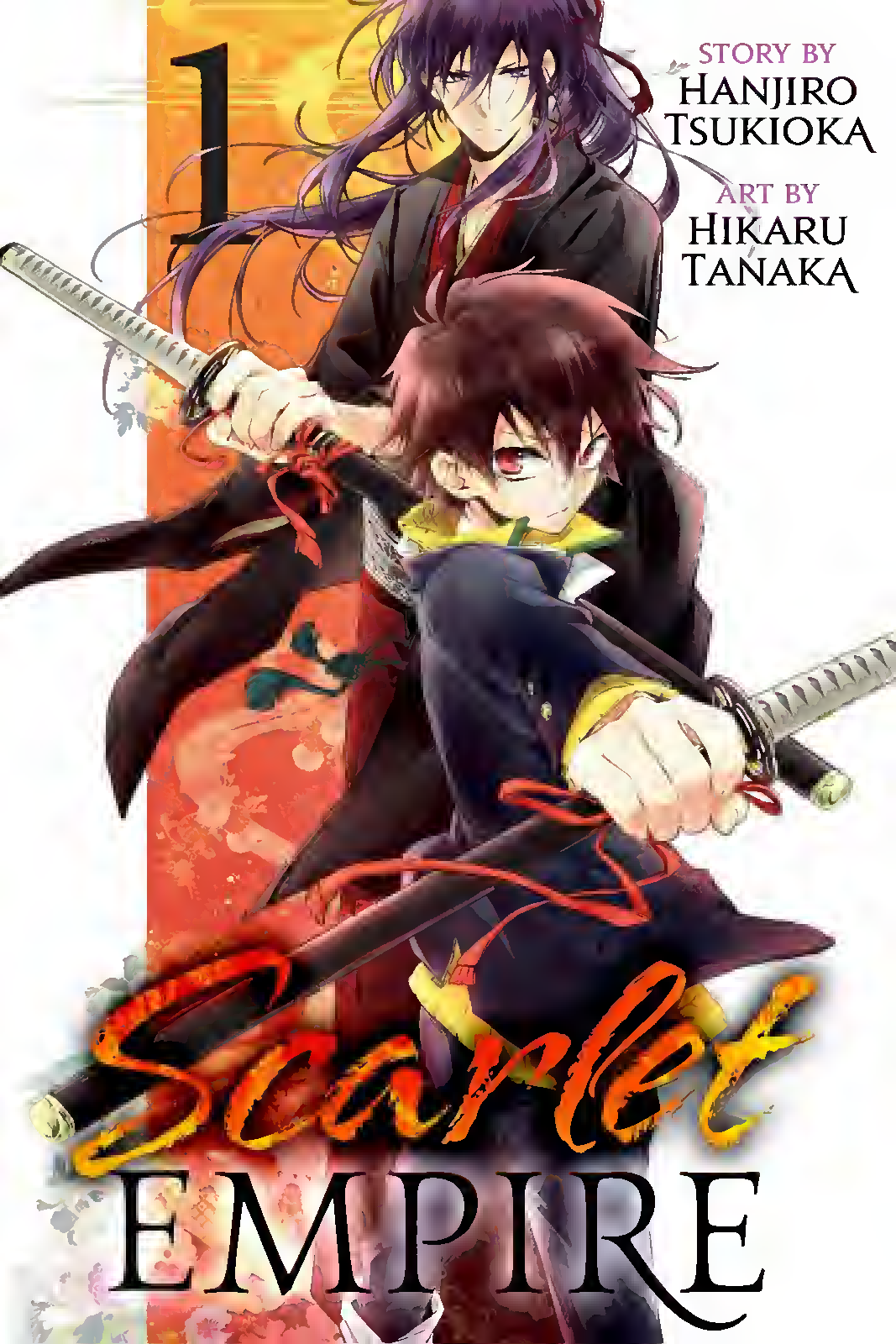
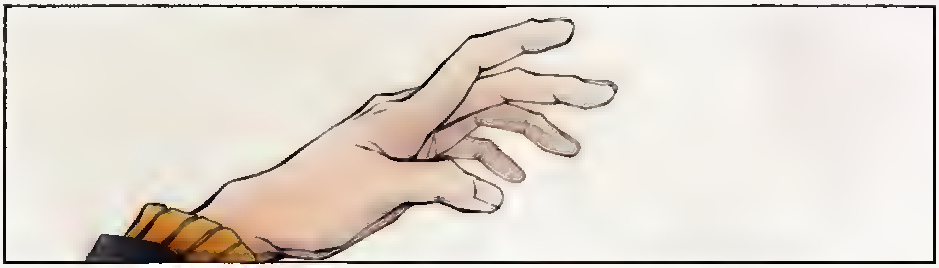

1
STORY BY
HANJIRO TSUKIOKA
ART BY
HIKARU TANAKA
Scarlet
EMPIRE

1
Scarlet EMPIRE
STORY BY
HANJIRO TSUKIOKA
ART BY
HIKARU TANAKA

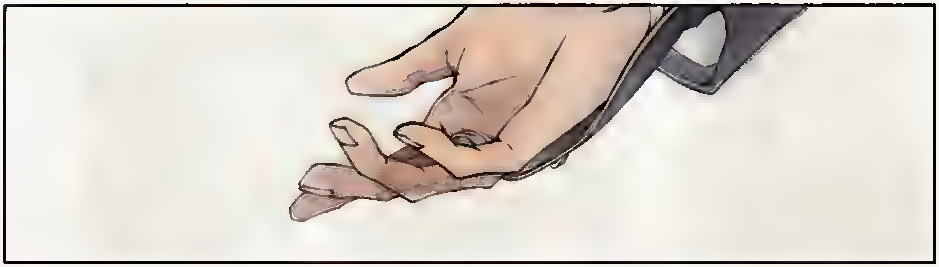
CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 ◇ TWIN WISHES —— 003
CHAPTER 2 ◇ A CHANCE ENCOUNTER AT DAWN —— 069
CHAPTER 3 ◇ THE WINDS OF BEGINNING —— 123
CHAPTER 4 ◇ YOUTHFUL PRIDE —— 161

IF I CAN PROTECT THEM WITH THESE HANDS...



...MAYBE I CAN BECOME A HERO.



IF I NEVER LET GO OF HIS HAND...

...MAYBE THE COURSE OF HISTORY CAN BE CHANGED.

# Chapter 1: Twin Wishes

# Chapter 1: Twin Wishes

Scarlet
EMPIRE

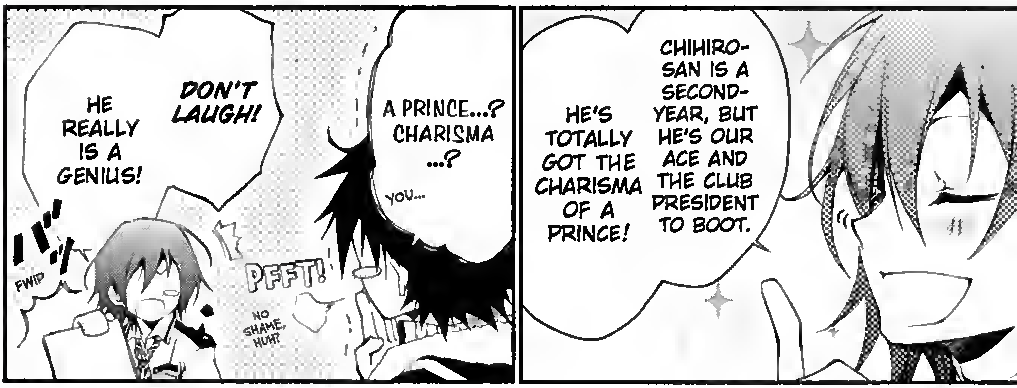
SIGN: MIYASAKA DOJO
THWACK
THWACK
HYAAAAH!!
CRACK

HA HA!!
THWACK
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
THWACK
PHEW!!
YOU REALLY ARE QUICK WITH A DEGOTE, NII-CHAN...
C'MON, LITTLE BRO!
SLAP
SLAP
YOU'RE NEVER GONNA MAKE FIRST STRING AT THE GREAT KAISEI ACADEMY AT THIS RATE!
HEH HEH HEH!
THAT'S "KOTETSU THE DEGOTE MASTER," ALL RIGHT.
HE'S LITTLE, BUT FAST.
HE'S ON A WHOLE DIFFERENT LEVEL...
TH-
THAT HURTS, NII-CHAN!

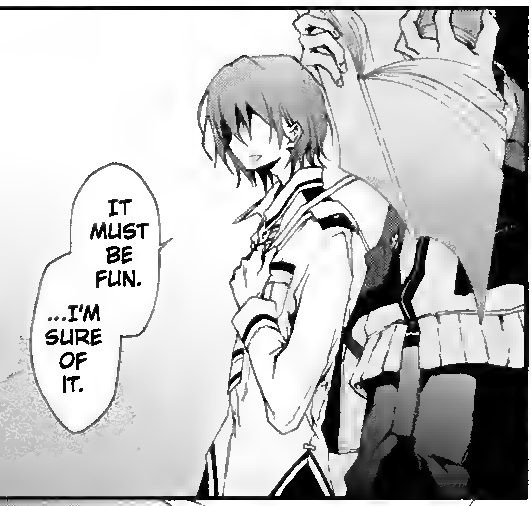
THE MIYASAKA BROTHERS ARE SOMETHING ELSE, HUH?
SERIOUSLY!?
THAT'S SO COOL!!
HE'S STILL A FIRST-YEAR, BUT I HEAR HE'LL TAKE PART IN THE INDIVIDUAL MATCHES AT THE ALL-KANTO TOURNAMENT.
KOTETSU GOES TO A REGULAR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL.
HEY, NOT BAD! THAT'S THE HEROIC SPIRIT, LITTLE BRO!
HOW YOU'RE TICKING ME OFF!
HUH?
THE TWINS GO TO DIFFERENT HIGH SCHOOLS?
IF YOU DON'T PAY ATTENTION, YOU'RE GOING TO SLIP UP!
...EVEN AFTER GETTING INTO KAISEI, HE STILL CAN'T BEAT HIS BROTHER, HUH?
YAYOI IS USUALLY PRETTY STRONG TOO BUT...
KA-THUNK
KOTETSU IS...
...A REAL HERO AROUND HERE.

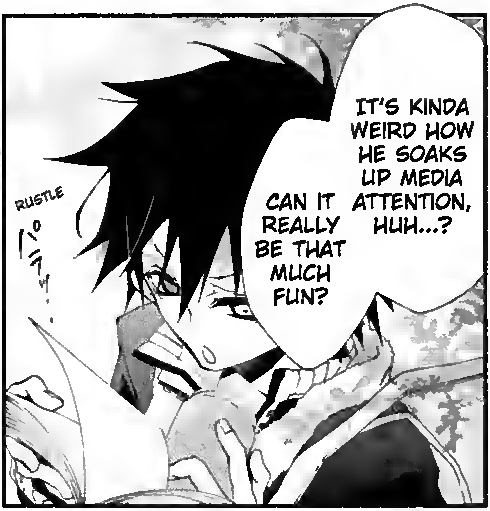
YEAH!
IT'S HARD TO KEEP UP, BUT...
...I GET TO LEARN FROM CHIHIRO-SAN'S EXAMPLE!
SO HOW'RE THINGS AT KAISEI ACADEMY, YAYOI?
YOU HAVING FUN?
FSHHT

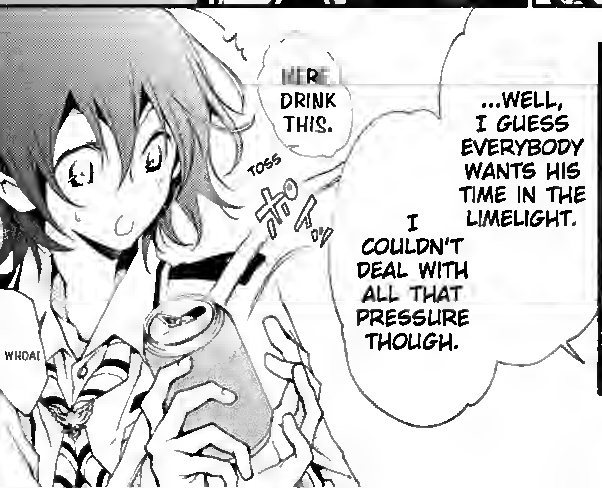
IS HE GONNA BE AT THE ALL-KANTO TOURNA-MENT IN A COUPLE DAYS?
OF COURSE!
OH, RIGHT. THE "WIZARD OF SASHIMEN," HUH?
CHIHIRO?


HE REALLY IS A GENIUS!
DON'T LAUGH!
FWIP
A PRINCE...? CHARISMA ...?
YOU...
PFFT!
NO SHAME, HUH?
HE'S TOTALLY GOT THE CHARISMA OF A PRINCE!
CHIHIRO-SAN IS A SECOND-YEAR, BUT HE'S OUR ACE AND THE CLUB PRESIDENT TO BOOT.

剣道LIFE 5
2017年
特集
魁星撃院2年☆川瀬千尋「刺し面の鬼才」期待の王子は超有望！
MAGAZINE: KENDO LIFE 5, CHIHIRO KAWASE, SECOND-YEAR AT KAISEI ACADEMY: ALL ABOUT THAT PROMISING PRINCE, THE WIZARD OF SASHIMEN
LOOK, IT'S THIS MONTH'S KENDO LIFE!!
...WHOA.
THEY SURE ARE MAKING A FUSS OVER HIM...


IT MUST BE FUN.
...I'M SURE OF IT.


RUSTLE
IT'S KINDA WEIRD HOW HE SOAKS UP MEDIA ATTENTION, HUH...?
CAN IT REALLY BE THAT MUCH FUN?


WHOA!
HERE, DRINK THIS.
TOSS
I COULDN'T DEAL WITH ALL THAT PRESSURE THOUGH.
...WELL, I GUESS EVERYBODY WANTS HIS TIME IN THE LIMELIGHT.

...YAYOI?

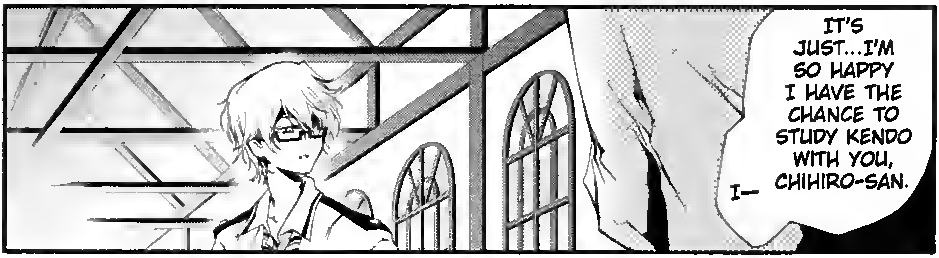
...THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE TOUGH, NII-CHAN.
...TO MAKE HIS LIVING ANYWHERE!
TA-DAA!
A HERO LIKE ME...
...JUST NEEDS HIS TRUSTY BLADE...
YAYOI.
PAT
DON'T SELL YOURSELF SHORT.
YOU'VE GOT A BETTER FEEL FOR THIS THAN I DO.
SOMEDAY, YOU'RE GOING TO FIGHT IN THE FINALS!
SO DO YOUR BEST...
...YAYOI.

YOU SHOULD DO YOUR BEST TOO, NII-CHAN.
AT GETTING TALLER AND STUFF.
CUT IT OUT!
YOU KNOW, MILK JUST MAKES YOUR BONES THICKER.
NO WAY!
C'MON, YOU CAN'T TRICK ME!
OKAY.
I WILL!
CHIHIRO-SAN!
YAYOI.

I...
I'M SORRY.
YOU SEEM RATHER PLEASED ABOUT SOME-THING.
IS THAT ALL YOU HAD TO SAY?

IT WAS A LITTLE MUCH, WASN'T IT?
CLACK
OH, THAT?

I SAW YOU IN THIS MONTH'S KENDO LIFE!


I—
IT'S JUST...I'M SO HAPPY I HAVE THE CHANCE TO STUDY KENDO WITH YOU, CHIHIRO-SAN.

THANK YOU SO MUCH!!
UM...
OH!
I'M TRULY GLAD THAT YOU CAME TO KAISEI.
YOU'VE GOT REAL TALENT.

I'M HAPPY TOO.

HUH!?

COULD YOU...
...MEET ME AFTER SCHOOL IN THE CLUBROOM?
TOMORROW IS A VERY IMPORTANT MATCH FOR KAISEI ACADEMY.
YOU'RE NOT IN OUR FIRST STRING YET, BUT STILL, DON'T BE LAZY ABOUT YOUR TRAINING.
YES, SIR!
OH, AND YAYOI? I WANT TO TALK TO YOU.
CREAK
EXCUSE ME...

!!
.....
... FAST ...
FAST FAST FAST ...
MUTTER
MUTTER
TOO FAST ...
HYAH
CRACK
SQUIK
SLAM
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
...CHI...
...HIRO-SAN...?
YOUR BROTHER'S DEGOTE ARE INCREDIBLY QUICK.
FLINCH
I'M BOUND TO FACE HIM IN THE FINALS TOMORROW.
STRIDE
STRIDE

N-NO, MAYBE NOT...HE MIGHT NOT GET THAT FAR...
I'M SURE OF IT!
HE'S BOUND TO REACH THE FINALS!!
AND THEN...
...HE'LL LOSE TO ME.
LISTEN, YAYOI.
IN TOMORROW'S TOURNAMENT, WE, AS MEMBERS OF THE KAISEI ACADEMY KENDO CLUB...
...CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO LOSE, NO MATTER THE CIRCUM-STANCES!!
I KNOW...!
BUMP
SHUDDER

WHAM
VIC-TORY!
VICTORY, VICTORY, VICTORY!
VICTORY... VICTORY...
VICTORY !!!
THAT'S HOW WE WILL SECURE OUR FUTURES!
WE HAVE TO KEEP WINNING!
WHUMP
DON'T...
...LIE TO ME!!!
DON'T YOU GET IT, YAYOI?
I GET IT!

"HISTORY IS WRITTEN BY THE VICTORS."
YOU KNOW WHAT THAT SAYING MEANS, DON'T YOU?
GAHK!
HNGH...
UNH...
I'M...
...
NOT...
...
LYING
..TO..
YOU
CLACK
KOFF!
KOFF!
SLIDE
IN THAT CASE BEFORE THE FINALS TOMOR ROW...
...CUT THE STRING ON YOUR BROTHER'S SHINAI

OH!
YAYOI! YOU'RE LATE!
I'M HOME...
SLIDE
ZOOM
LEAVE YOUR STUFF!
HUH?
SURE ...
HEY!
LET'S GO TO THE SHRINE! WE'VE GOTTA PRAY FOR A WIN!!
COME ON!
GRAB
DASH

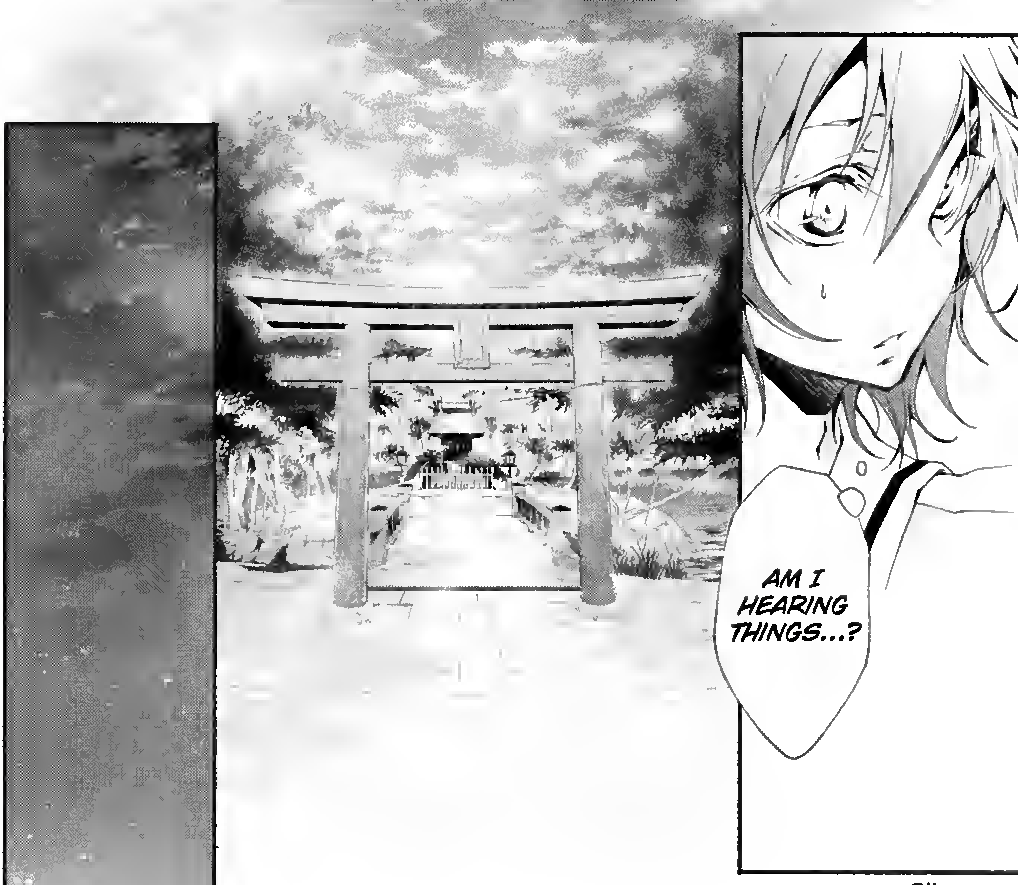
OH, AND! PLEASE HELP YAYOI GET ON THE FIRST STRING SOON!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, NII-CHAN?
UMM...PLEASE HELP ME BECOME A HERO TOMORROW!
DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF...
I'M FINE--
CLAP
CLAP
RUB RUB
JINGLE
THE GOD OF HIKAWA HAS BEEN WATCHING OVER OUR FAMILY FOR GENERATIONS, YOU KNOW.
WE'D NEVER GET ANYWHERE IF WE DIDN'T COME HERE FIRST.
?
...NII-CHAN, DID YOU HEAR A WEIRD NOISE JUST NOW?
HUH!?
NO, NOTHING... ANYWAY, DID YOU FINISH SAYING YOUR PRAYERS PROPERLY?

ALL RIGHT!
LET'S GO HOME. DINNER'S WAITING!
NNN
OH. OKAY.
JINGLE
THERE IT IS AGAIN ...
I WANT SOME PORK CUTLET! YEAH!
JINGLE
JINGLE
JINGLE
JANNGLE

ALL RIGHT!
LET'S GO HOME. DINNER'S WAITING!
NNH!
OH.
OKAY.
JINGLE
THERE IT IS AGAIN ...
I WANT SOME PORK CUTLET! YEAH!
JINGLE
JINGLE
JINGLE

JANNNGLE

YAYOI?
I'M LEAVING.
I'M STARVING!
... OKAY ...
?


AM I HEARING THINGS...?

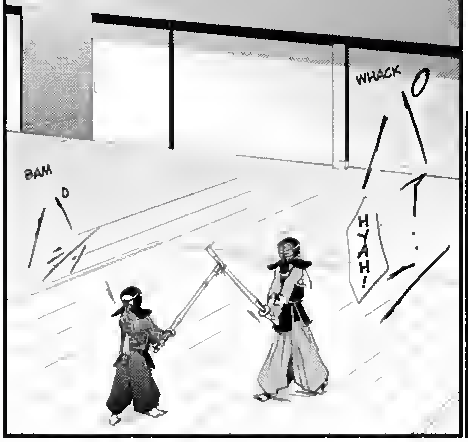
LIGHTS OUT!
CLICK
CLICK
OKAY ...
HMPH
...HEY, YAYOI.
YOUR BIG BRO...
...IS GONNA WIN THE TOURNAMENT TOMORROW. JUST WATCH ME.
CLENCH
.....YAYOI?

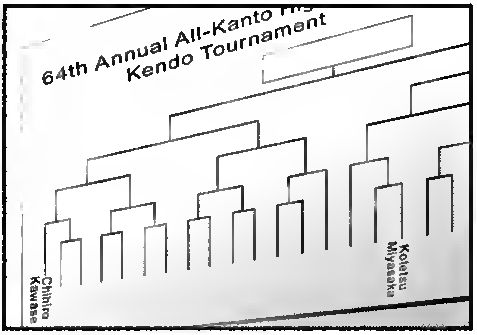
HEYYY! ARE YOU ASLEEP ALREADY!?
POP
FLINCH
I TOLD YOU NOT TO DO THAT...
YOU'LL GIVE ME A HEART ATTACK...
OH, C'MON...
IF YOU'RE AWAKE, YOU OUGHTA ANSWER ME!
...NII-CHAN.
HM?
YOU NEVER CHANGE, DO YOU.
HUH?
WHAT!? I DON'T?
NO, YOU DON'T.
YOU'RE TOUGH ...
...AND FULL OF ENERGY.
AND YOUR HEIGHT ...
WHAT ABOUT IT!?
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN EVERYONE'S HERO.
...BUT I...
CLENCH
...I...
...DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

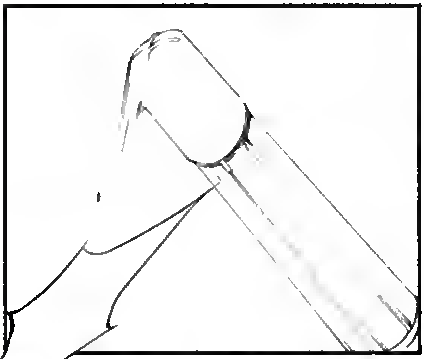
I ASKED IF YOU'VE GOT YOUR BLANKETS ON STRAIGHT.
YEAH! OF COURSE I DO!
NOT JUST OVER YOUR STOMACH?
...Y-YEAH...
CLENCH
RUSTLE RUSTLE
WHAT'S UP?
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?
MM.
FORGET IT...
...YAYOI?
WELL, GOOD NIGHT...
YEAH ... GOOD NIGHT.
CHIRP
CHIRP CHIRP

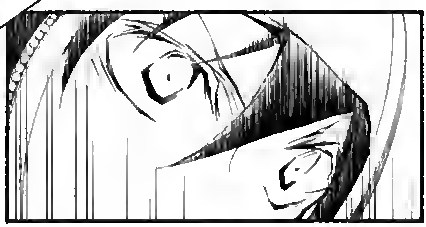
HERE.
I'LL COME CHEER FOR YOU LATER.
OH!
THANKS!
HEY, MOM!
I'M HEADED OUT!!
CLENCH
OKAY!
BE CARE-FUL!
OKAY!
YEAH!
LEAVE IT TO YOUR BIG BROTHER!
SEE YOU AT THE MEET!
DO YOUR BEST.

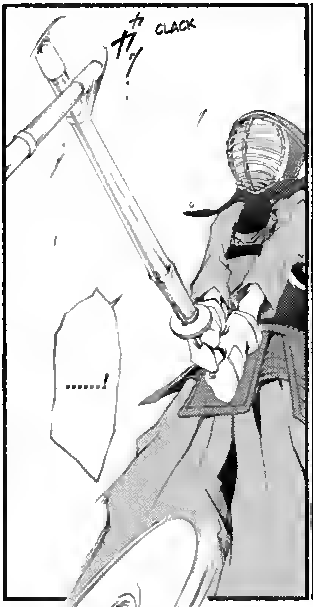
RATTLE
RATTLE
SHUT
MURMUR
HYAHH!
CRACK
WHAP
THWAP
MURMUR


WHACK
BAM
HYAH!

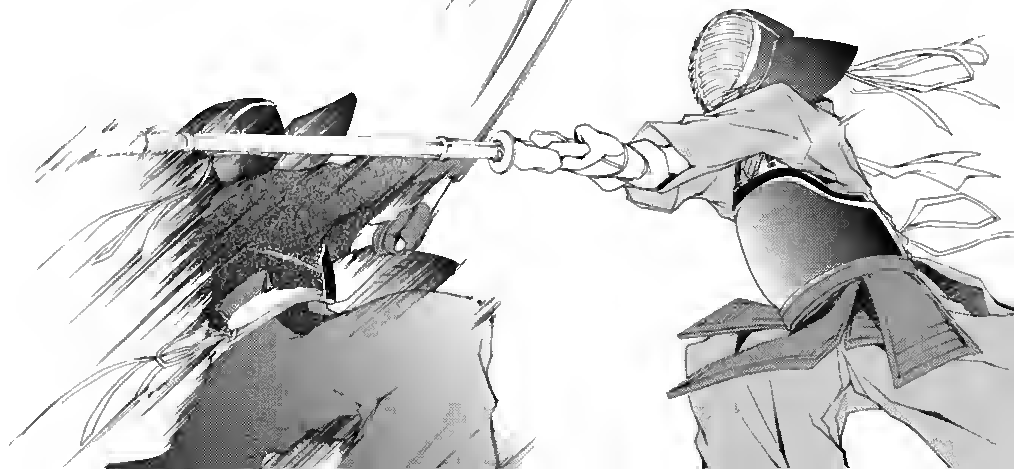

64th Annual All-Kanto
Kendo Tournament
Chihiro Kawase
Kotetsu Miyasaka





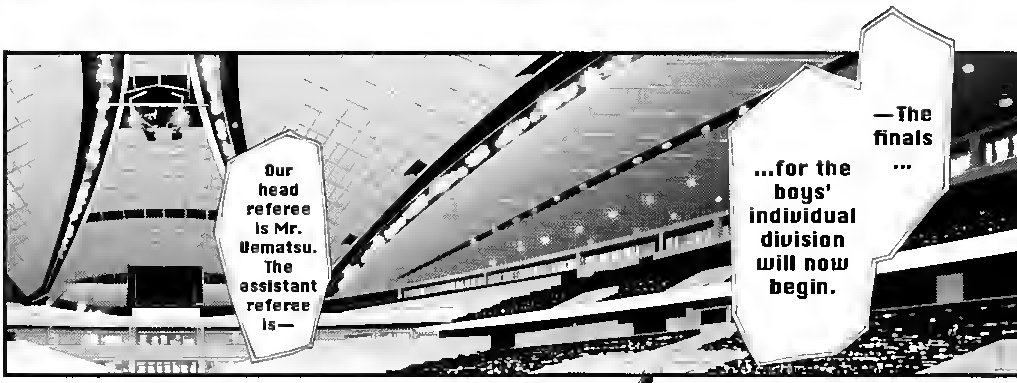

CLACK
.....!

SCRAPE
宮坂
ARMOR MIYASAKA



WHOOOA...
FWIP
WHACK
KOTE! ONE POINT!!
YES!!
THAT'S THE MATCH!!
MIYASAKA FROM MUSASHI ICHINOMIYA HIGH SCHOOL ADVANCES TO THE FINALS!!
CLENCH
AWW, MAN! I CAN'T LOSE TO HIM!
RRRUMBLE
FLINCH
I'M IN THE ZONE!
HMM...
LET'S SEE, MY OPPONENT FOR THE FINALS IS...
CHIHIRO KAWASE!?
64th Annual All-Kant
Kendo Tournamen
Chihiro Kawase
Kotetsu Miyasaka
HEY, IT'S THE FAMOUS "PRINCE"!!
WHO, HIM?
WOW, HE'S REALLY TINY
THAT'S THE FIRST-YEAR KID WHO MADE IT TO THE FINALS?
THAT'S "KOTETSU THE DEGOTE MASTER."
HE'S BEEN A BIG DEAL EVER SINCE MIDDLE SCHOOL.

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THIS MATCH!!
BUT IF KOTETSU'S NOT AFRAID OF THAT, THEN MAYBE...
BUT HE CAN'T READ KAWASE'S MOVES IN ADVANCE! PLUS, KAWASE'S GOT A QUICK LUNGE.
EVEN IF HE TRIES A HEAD STRIKE, KOTETSU'S SPEED IS INSANE, RIGHT?
NAH, IT'LL BE KOTE-TSU.
BUT I GUESS THE PRINCE OF SASHIMEN WILL WIN BY A MILE IN THE FINALS...


Our head referee is Mr. Uematsu. The assistant referee is—
...for the boys' individual division will now begin.
—The finals ...

ARMOR: KAWASE
ARMOR: MIYASAKA
WHOOSH
川瀬
宮坂

I CAN TELL HE'S GOT SKILLS.
HIS "GENIUS" REP IS MORE THAN JUST TALK.
THE PRINCE OF SASHIMEN, THE ONE YAYOI TALKED ABOUT...
SHFF
In red, from Kaisei Academy...
...Chihiro Kawasei
SO THAT'S CHIHIRO KAWASE!!
In white, from Musashi ichinomiya High School...
...Kotetsu Miyasaka!
WATCH THIS, YAYOI...
I'M GONNA WIN FOR SURE!!
HAJIME!!

SILENCE
SHOOM
SKRRK
!!
.....!

CRACK
I SEE...!
THERE'S NOT AN OUNCE OF WASTE IN HIS MOVES OR HIS STANCE...!!
...BUT...
WHACK
...I'M FASTER THAN HE IS!!
KOTE!!
!?
THAT WAS A DEGOTE!!
HE'S FAST!!
CLAMOR

...
TCH...!
FWP
HAJIME!!
ROUND TWO...
—That concludes ...
...the awards ceremony.
Next up is—
THE BOYS' FINALS WERE OVER IN NO TIME, HUH?
MAN ...
YEAH. THAT FIRST-YEAR KID WON BY A MILE!!

TWO TO ZERO AGAINST THE PRINCE OF SASHIMEN... THAT MIYASAKA DOESN'T KID AROUND!
WHOA, I'M GONNA FALL!
HEAVE-HO!
BUT HE CAN STILL GO TO NATIONALS WITH SECOND PLACE, RIGHT?
MAYBE HE WAS SAVING HIS ENERGY FOR THAT.
STILL, WHAT A WAY TO LOSE!
SO MUCH FOR BEING THE PRIDE OF KAI-SEI.
SQUEEZE
YAYOI.
...COME WITH ME.
...OKAY...

I'M HOME!!
HEY!
YAYOI!!
SLAM
KCHAK
I TOTALLY WON!!
DID YOU SEE IT
.....
...HEY...
ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?
... WHY...?
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO WIN?
GRIT
.....
JUST LOSE AL-READY ...
... HUH?
...WHY ...?
HEY...
WHAT...
...DID YOU SAY...?

I WISH YOU'D LOST!!
...WHAT THE HELL?
YOU!!
SAY THAT AGAIN TO MY—
WHAM
HUH?
WHAT THE ...?
WHAT...
... HAPPENED TO YOU...!?

...HA HA...
CRAZY, RIGHT?
AND IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!
...I THOUGHT I WAS FINALLY THROUGH BEING "KOTETSU'S LITTLE BROTHER."
WHEN I... ...GOT INTO THE FAMOUS KAISEI ACADEMY...
...IN THE END...
...I WAS JUST BEING USED!
WHAM
...MORE THAN ANYTHING, I WANTED TO BE SEEN FOR WHO I WAS.
I REALLY LOOKED UP... ...TO CHIHIRO-SAN.
...BUT STILL...
THAT'S WHY I DID MY BEST EVERY DAY.
I THOUGHT, NOW THAT I'M HERE, THINGS WILL CHANGE.

IT'S ALL BECAUSE ...
...I'M YOUR LITTLE BROTHER!
... YA... ... YO! ...
NO WAY.
DID HE—
WHAT MAKES YOU SUCH A HERO!!?
NOTHING WILL EVER CHANGE FOR ME... ...AS LONG AS YOU'RE AROUND!!
SHUT UP...!
...I WISH... ...YOU'D JUST DISAP- PEAR

JUST DISAPPEAR FOREVER, WHY DON'T YOU!!?
ARE YOU...
...DONE?
!?
.....
I SAID, HAVE YOU GOTTEN EVERYTHING OFF YOUR CHEST!!?
...I'LL SHOW YOU...

...WHY I HAD TO LEARN...
...TO BE SO TOUGH.
CREAK
SLAM
YOU'RE SUCH A WIMP, YAYOI!
AND KOTE-TSU'S SO TOUGH AND ALL...
YOU'RE NOT LIKE HIM AT ALL!
YOU'RE NOT MUCH LIKE YOUR MOM EITHER!
HEY, MAYBE YOU'RE ADOPTED!
BWA HA HA HA...
HEY, YOU GUYS!

SWING
HI-YAH!
BEGONE, EVILDOERS!
TCH! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!
SWING

QUIT BEING MEAN TO YAYOI!!
ACK!
IT'S KOTE-TSU!

YOU'RE NOT HURT, ARE YOU?
YOU OKAY, YAYOI?

THAT YOU'RE NOT MY FAMILY...
...I'M NOT LIKE YOU.
...THEY ALL SAY...

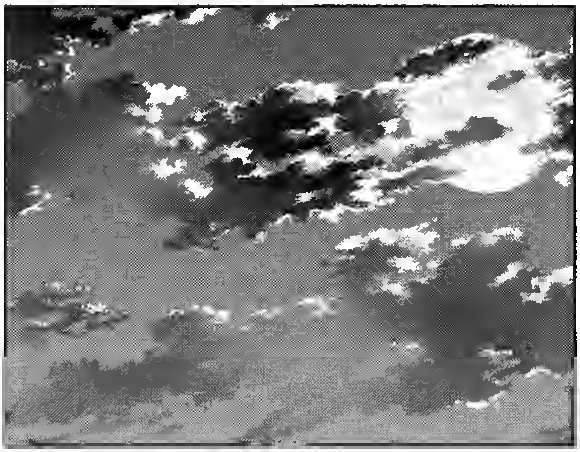
DON'T WORRY. I'M GONNA GET REAL STRONG...
...AND BEAT UP ANYBODY WHO SAYS ANYTHING MEAN ABOUT YOU!
NAH. IT CAN'T BE!
SHAKE
SHAKE
HEY. DON'T CRY.
OKAY...
SNIFF!

THE COLORS...

HEY, KOTETSU.
YOU'VE ALREADY GOT YOUR RECOMMENDATION FOR KAISEI, RIGHT?
WHAT? WHY!?
ARE YOU AN IDIOT!?
..IDIOT?
WHAT A WASTE!!
NAH.
I'M GOING TO THE LOCAL PREFECTURAL SCHOOL.
IT LOOKS LIKE...
...YAYOI WANTS TO GO TO KAISEI.
...ARE YOU SERIOUS?

I'M ALREADY TOUGH ANYWAY.
JUST AS LONG AS HE GETS BETTER AT KENDO!
IT'S FINE! I DON'T CARE WHERE I GO.
GOING TO A NO-NAME SCHOOL LIKE THAT, EVEN IF IT IS FOR HIS SAKE...
THE LOCAL SCHOOL... THAT'S ICHINO-MIYA, RIGHT?
...THERE ARE LIMITS EVEN TO BEING A BROTHER, YOU KNOW...
.....I GUESS, BUT...
DRIP
ポタ
THAT BAS-TARD ... HE ...
CLATTER

HE'S RUINED EVERYTHING!!!



YO.
PRINCE OF SASHIMEN.

IT FIGURES I'D FIND YOU IN THIS DUMP.
SO, IT'S YOU... KOTETSU MIYASAKA.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
AWW, DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH ME.
YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING OUT FOR MY BROTHER, RIGHT?
I CAME TO SAY...
...THANKS!!!
SLAM
JAB

BUT ALL YOU DID WAS GRIND HIM DOWN...!!
YOU KNOW... ...YAYOI REALLY BELIEVED IN YOU.

!?
...I'LL TAKE YOUR BROTHER'S FUTURE IN EXCHANGE
FAIR'S FAIR. ISN'T IT? YOU WON AGAINST ME SO...
WHAT!?
GRIND HIM DOWN...? THAT'S SLANDER

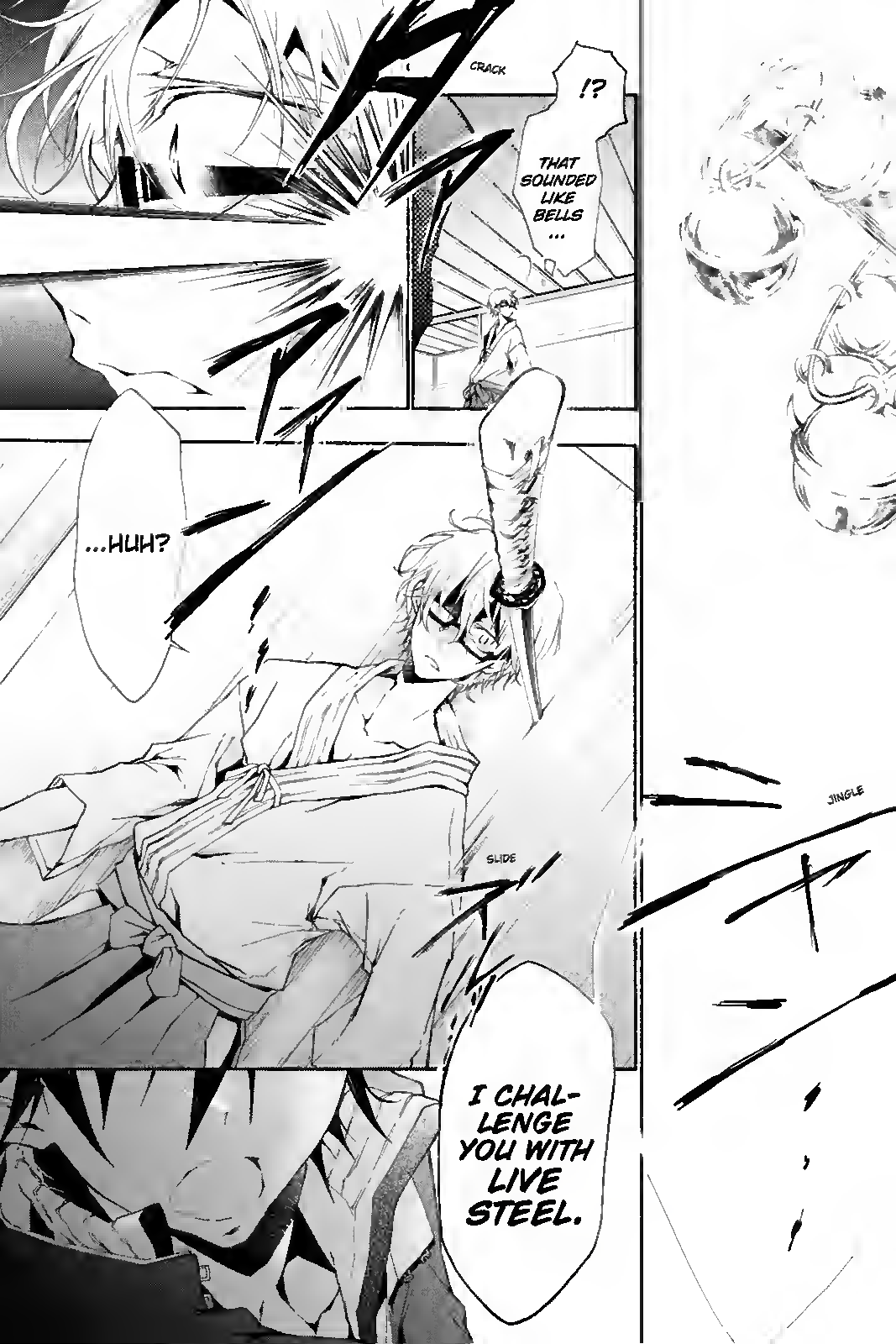
WHY, YOU...!
WHAT DID YOU SAY TO YAYOI!?
HE WAS PROMISED A REWARD IN RETURN, OF COURSE.
AS A STUDENT AT KAISEI, YAYOI WAS GIVEN AN IMPORTANT MISSION.
AT KAISEI, IT'S OUR DUTY TO WIN!

A VERY FAIR DEAL, DON'T YOU THINK?
IN THE EVENT OF OUR VICTORY, I PROMISED HIM THE POST OF CLUB V.P...
...AND MY SEAT AS THE NEXT PRESIDENT SOMEDAY.
YOU SEE WHY HE CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO CARRY ON AT KAISEI...!?
CLUNK
BUT THEN!
YAYOI REFUSED!!
YAYOI IS...!!
HE HAS THE SKILLS TO REACH THE TOP AT KAISEI WITHOUT DOING STUFF LIKE THAT!
HE COULD TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU...!!
WHAM
...WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROB-LEM!!!?

...SO HE MEANS THAT MUCH TO YOU?
IN THAT CASE, LET'S MAKE A NEW DEAL.
THUD
SHOVE
AT THE NEXT NATIONAL TOURNA-MENT...
...YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE TO ME.
IF YOU DO, I'LL KEEP LOOKING AFTER YAYOI.
WHAT ...!!?
ARE THOSE TERMS TOO HARD TO SWALLOW?
WHAT DID YOU COME HERE FOR!? YOU CAME TO SAVE YOUR BROTHER, RIGHT!?!

...LET ME...
...EXPLAIN ONE THING TO YOU.
HISTORY IS WRITTEN BY THE VICTORS.
THE LOSERS ARE ALWAYS IN THE WRONG.
THAT'S HOW IT GOES IN THE REAL WORLD.
IT'S THE ONLY REAL TRUTH THROUGHOUT ALL OF HISTORY.
SO!!!
HOW ABOUT IT, KOTETSU MIYASAKA!!?
WILL YOU BEAR THE DISHONOR OF DEFEAT...
...TO SAVE YOUR PRECIOUS LITTLE BROTHER!!?
...
... HMPH.
SO YOU DON'T CARE AFTER ALL.
SO MUCH FOR YOUR PRETENSIONS OF BROTHERLY LOVE.

...HOW PATHETIC.
I COULD JUST VOMIT.
CLENCH
—CHIHIRO KAWASE...


CRACK
!?
THAT SOUNDED LIKE BELLS ...
...HUH?
SLIDE
JINGLE
I CHAL-LENGE YOU WITH LIVE STEEL.

...I WOULD LAY DOWN MY LIFE...!!!
KSHINNING
...L...
LIVE ...!?
PULL IT OUT.
CLATTER
CLACK
LET'S SETTLE IT ONCE AND FOR ALL.
WHICH OF US DESERVES TO LIVE?
WHICH OF US IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YAYOI...?
WHAT ...?
... YES ...
JINGLE
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU SAID?
"HISTORY IS WRITTEN BY THE VICTORS."
JINGLE
FOR YAYOI'S SAKE...
JINGLE
JINGLE
FOR HIM...
JINGLE

...L...
LIVE ...!?
PULL IT OUT.
CLATTER
CLACK
WHICH OF US IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YAYOI...?
WHICH OF US DESERVES TO LIVE?
LET'S SETTLE IT ONCE AND FOR ALL.
WHAT ...?
... YES ...
JINGLE
"HISTORY IS WRITTEN BY THE VICTORS."
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU SAID?
JINGLE
FOR YAYOI'S SAKE...
JINGLE
JINGLE
FOR HIM...
JINGLE

...I WOULD LAY DOWN MY LIFE...!!!
KSHHHNNG

Stay thy hand!

WHUMP
JINGLE
!?

WHAT THE ...!!?
CLANNING

SPLURSH
AAAARGH!
CLANG
KSHIIING
SKSH
ZLASH

SPLAT

THWUMP
CLANG
カラン!!
カラン
CLATTER
CLATTER
...
WHAT
...?

IS THIS...
...BLOOD...!?
ARE YOU ANOTHER CRAVEN DOG OF THE SHOGUNATE !?
KSHING
WHAT PECULIAR GARB HE WEARS...!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
WHAT'S GOING ON?

...HUH!?
WHO'RE YOU GUYS!?
DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH!!
CUT HIM DOWN!
I HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING ...
...WHAT HAD JUST BEGUN.

AT THAT TIME ...
...I HAD NO CLUE WHAT WAS GOING ON.

Scarlet
EMPIRE

WHO ARE YOU GUYS!!?
DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH!!
RUSTLE
CUT HIM DOWN!!!
WHOOSH
GNH!
OW!
N...
NO, NO, NO!
HANG ON A SECOND—

# Chapter 2: A Chance Encounter at Dawn

LIVE STEEL!?
WHAT...
...THE...?
SHINK
KNOCK IT OFF!!

# Chapter 2: A Chance Encounter at Dawn

WHUMP
WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM !!?
CLAAANG
STAGGER
GNNH !!
SKSH
!?
USING THE FLAT ...!?
WHY, YOU ...!
HERE, YOU SATSUMA DOGS!!
GRIT
WHAT!? MORE OF THEM!?
HAVE AT YOU!!
TCH!
ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER...
WE CAN NO LONGER TOLERATE ...
...YOUR COUNTLESS ACTS OF INJUSTICE !!

!!
WHOOSH
GUH ...
SLASH
HEY! CUT IT OUT!!
WHUMP
HRAAH!
YOU'RE NEXT!

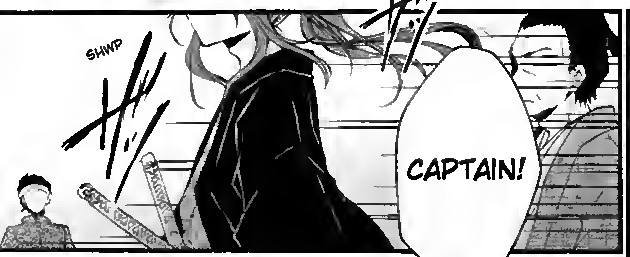
WHO ARE THESE GUYS?
SAMU-RAI!?
THUMP
THUD
CONK
WHUMP
KANEDA-SAN!!
RUSTLE
HE CUT MY FACE!
SHOCK
*ALSO USING LIVE STEEL
...DO THEY NOR-MALLY USE LIVE STEEL !!?
ARE THEY FILMING A SHOW OR SOME-THING? AND IF SO...
SHAKE
HUH!?
NO..
NO, IT WASN'T ME!!
SHAKE
YOU FIEND!!
HOW DARE YOU ATTACK KANEDA-SAN...?
HIS SKILLS ARE SHARP...
BE ON YOUR GUARD ...

HEY!
WHY...
...WON'T...
...YOU...
KSHING
...LISTEN!?
CLANG
TROMP
TROMP
WHUMP
ARGH...!
THE LAD HAS SKILLS...!!
DON'T GANG UP ON ME, YOU COWARDS!!
WHIRL

CL..NG
COME ON...
WILL YOU JUST...
...LISTEN TO—
...!
WHI..CK
SILENCE
CLINK
THUD
CLATTER

THIS LAND...
HE SEEMED NOT TO KNOW FRIEND FROM FOE... WHO ON EARTH IS HE?
I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH STRANGE ATTIRE.
IS HE FROM THE SHOGUNATE?
OR PERHAPS...

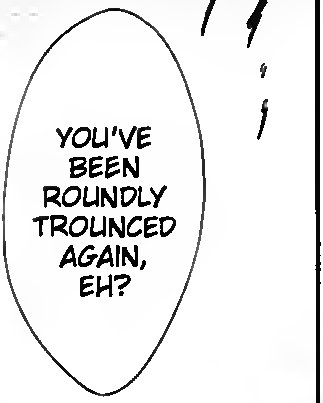
HELLO...
...KANE-CHAN.


SHWP
CAPTAIN!

SKFF

I APOLOGIZE FOR MY FAILURE...
NOW, NOW.
I'M GLAD YOUR WOUNDS AREN'T SERIOUS.

HEY, SOMEONE...
...COME AND TEND TO KANE-CHAN!


YOU'VE BEEN ROUNDLY TROUNCED AGAIN, EH?

SO?
WHAT HAP-PENED?
SIR!
SIX WERE STRUCK DOWN. FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE. AT THE HANDS OF THIS FELLOW.
NO REGARD FOR WHO WAS WHO...
...HM?

WHAT A CUTE FACE HE HAS...
MY, MY...
CAPTAIN! PLEASE DON'T BE RASH!
HMM...
LEAN
STAAARE
ZZZ... ZZZ...
BLINK
LUNGE
BOLT
SWISH
TAKE THAT!!!

...THE BOY HAS SKILL.
CAP-TAIN!!
WHUMP
TAKE HIM TO THE MANSION.
SEEMS HE WAS ONLY HALF AWAKE.
HE'S GONE BACK TO SLEEP.
WHAT AN AMUSING LAD.
I'LL INQUIRE ABOUT HIM, ALONG WITH THE SHOGUN-ATE'S MEN.
FLAP

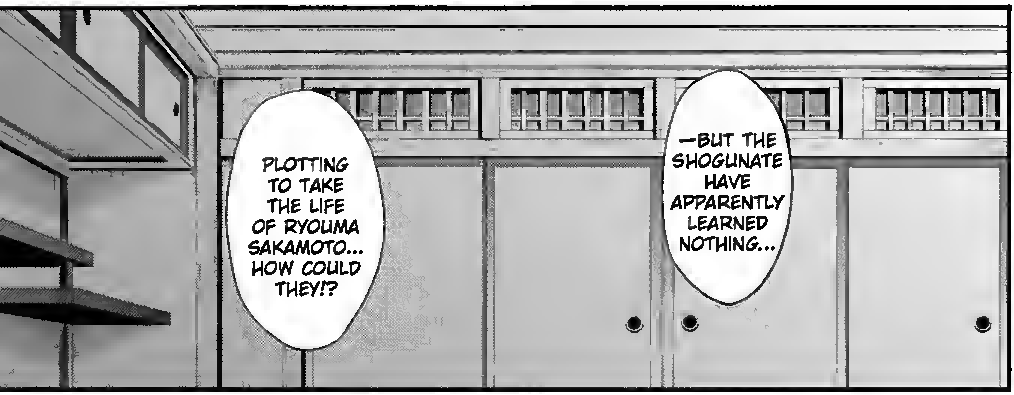
MURMUR
MURMUR
CAP-TAIN!
QUIT POKING ME!
THIS YOUNG KNAVE IS THE ONE WHO ATTACKED KANEDA-SAN!!
I TOLD YOU!
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO THAT KANEDA GUY!!
STOMP
WELL
I DID USE A DEGOTE OR TWO ON THE OTHER GUYS, BUT...
ANY-WAY!! YOU BETTER UNTIE THESE ROPES!!
RAAAH!
RAAWR!
YOU CLEARLY DON'T KNOW YOUR PLACE ...!
MAKE AN EFFORT TO BEHAVE YOUR-SELF!!
HOW DARE YOU MOCK US BY USING THE FLAT OF YOUR BLADE!!?
CAPTAIN.
LET'S CUT HIM DOWN AND BE RID OF HIM.
GRRR!
RAAH!

SILENCE
I TOLD YOU, I WAS JUST PASSING BY, OKAY!!?
I'M JUST A REGULAR KID!!
YOU GUYS ARE THE CRAZY ONES!
WHY, YOU...
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF—
I'M GONNA SUE!
SNAP
HOLD.
CLANK
WE ARE COMRADES IN BATTLE WHO FIGHT WITH ONE WILL.
THERE IS SOMETHING I WOULD ASK YOU.
WHEN YOU TURNED ON OUR COMRADES, WHY STRIKE DOWN THE SHOGUNATE'S MEN AS WELL?
AND GIVEN THE SKILLS YOU POS-SESS...
...I WISH TO KNOW YOUR REASONS FOR NOT KILLING ANY OF THEM.
WHY DID I...?
I DIDN'T KNOW WHO ANY OF THEM WERE, AND I DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING AGAINST THEM.
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD JUST KILL THEM.

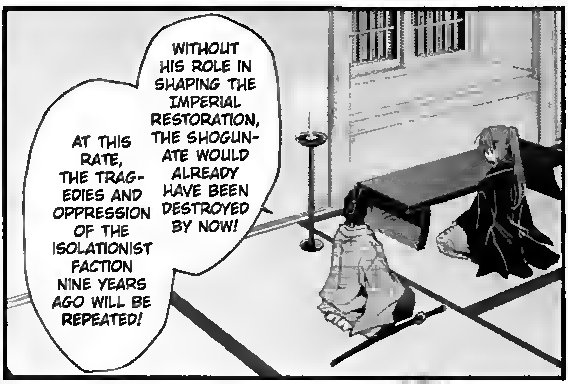
...IS THAT...
...REALLY YOUR ONLY REASON?
YEAH. ISN'T THAT NORMAL...?
I—HEY! THAT SWORD!!
THE ONE IN YOUR BELT!!
...?
THAT'S MINE! GIVE IT BACK!
THIS WAKIZASHI ...
...HAS ALWAYS BELONGED TO ME...
HUH!?
WHY, YOU KNAVE!
TRYING TO DECEIVE US AND STEAL THE CAPTAIN'S SWORD, EH...!?
WHAT!?
THAT SWORD'S BEEN PASSED DOWN IN MY FAMILY FOR AGES—
OUTRAGEOUS! HE DESERVES TEN THOUSAND DEATHS!
GAAH!
CAN'T WE TALK ABOUT THIS!?

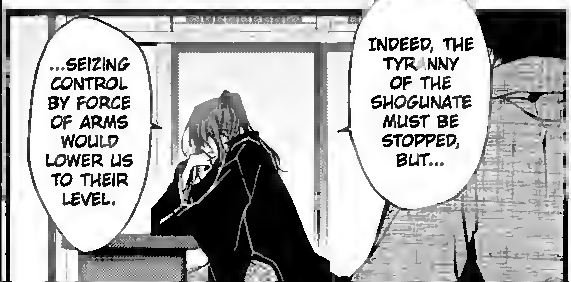
GRRRR...
KNEEL
CAP-TAIN.
THE MEN ARE GETTING WORKED UP OVER THIS AS WELL. LET'S LEAVE THIS FOR LATER AND INQUIRE AFTER THOSE DOGS OF THE SHOGUN...
HMM, INDEED...
WHAT A RACKET
ACH
M! RMLIR
RRR
P
WH...
WHAT!!?
STARE
!?
!!?
...YOU HAVE HONEST EYES.
SWISH
TAKE HIM TO THE JAIL.
HUH?
OH, AND POST A GUARD, WOULD YOU?
YES, SIR.
JAIL!?

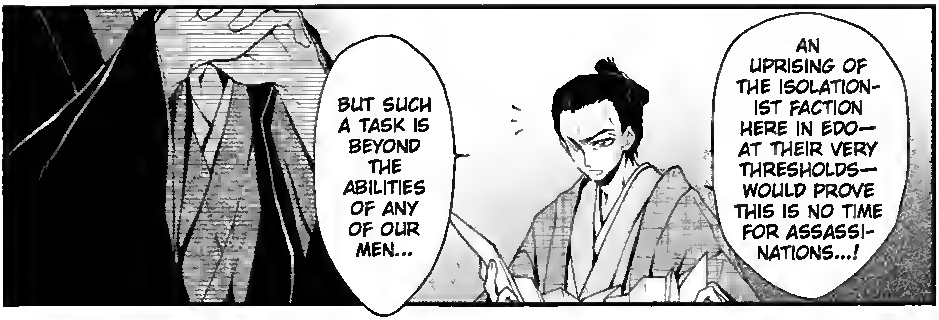
LET... ME... GO...!!
HEY!! LET GO OF ME!
DON'T CALL ME A CHILD!!
FLAIL
FLAIL
N-NOW, NOW...
OH! THE CHILD IS QUITE LIGHT!
UH?
WHOA!
GET YOUR HANDS OFF, YOU IDIOTS!
GRAB

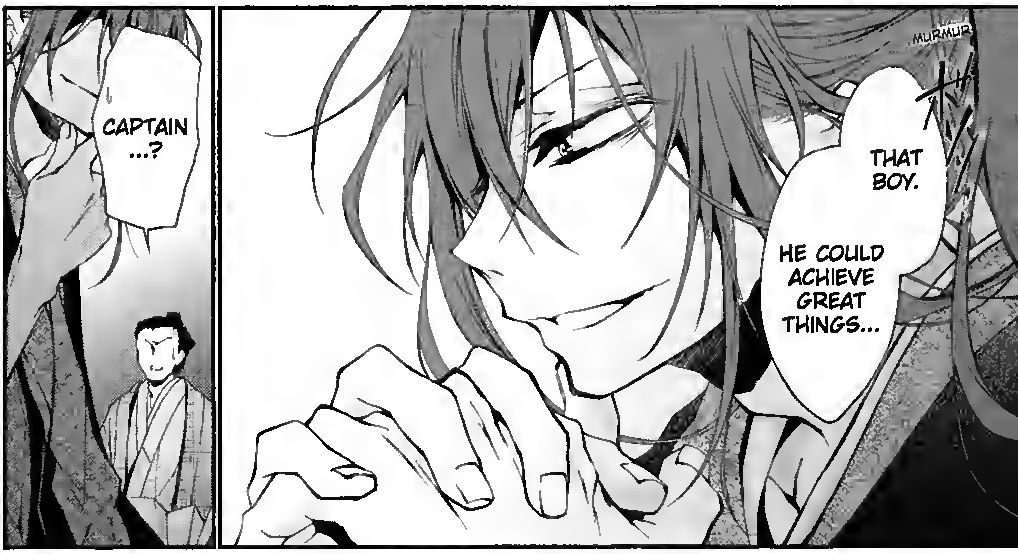

PLOTTING TO TAKE THE LIFE OF RYOUMA SAKAMOTO... HOW COULD THEY!?
—BUT THE SHOGUNATE HAVE APPARENTLY LEARNED NOTHING...

AT ANY RATE...
...FOR NOW, DIVERTING THE SHOGUNATE'S ATTENTION FROM LORD SAKAMOTO IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY.


AT THIS RATE, THE TRAGEDIES AND OPPRESSION OF THE ISOLATIONIST FACTION NINE YEARS AGO WILL BE REPEATED!
WITHOUT HIS ROLE IN SHAPING THE IMPERIAL RESTORATION, THE SHOGUNATE WOULD ALREADY HAVE BEEN DESTROYED BY NOW!


...SEIZING CONTROL BY FORCE OF ARMS WOULD LOWER US TO THEIR LEVEL.
INDEED, THE TYRANNY OF THE SHOGUNATE MUST BE STOPPED, BUT...


AN UPRISING OF THE ISOLATIONIST FACTION HERE IN EDO—AT THEIR VERY THRESHOLDS—WOULD PROVE THIS IS NO TIME FOR ASSASSINATIONS...!
BUT SUCH A TASK IS BEYOND THE ABILITIES OF ANY OF OUR MEN...


CAPTAIN ...?
MURMUR
THAT BOY.
HE COULD ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS...

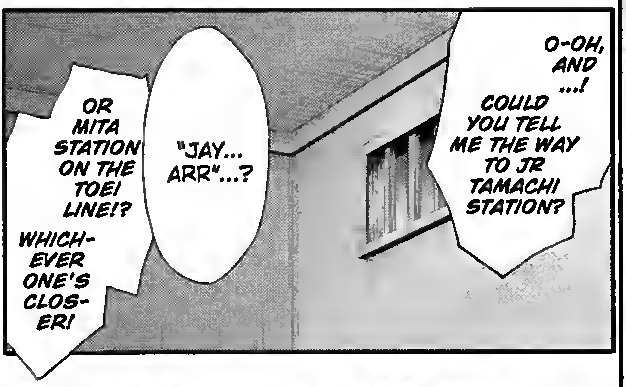
WE NEED MANPOWER!!
STAND
YES!
NEVER MIND THEIR NAMES! ANY MAN WITH SKILL!
UM... SIR...
LET'S GO, MIZUHARA!
...YES, SIR...
HERE WE GO...

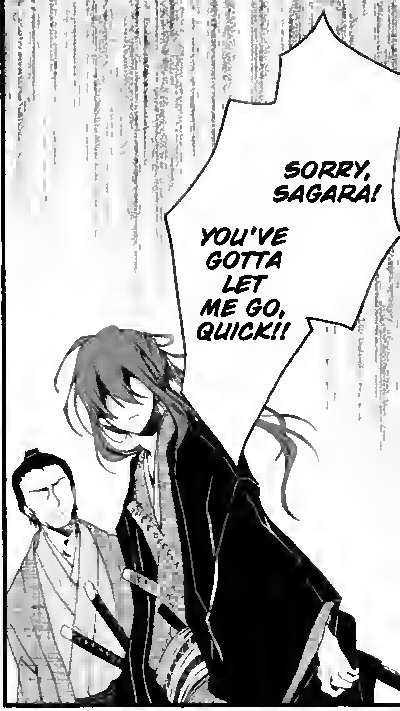
GEEZ.
WHAT'S GOING ON ANYWAY ...?
WHAT GIVES?
QUIT STARING AT ME!
I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING!!
FIRST, I GET ATTACKED OUT OF NOWHERE, THEN I'M THROWN IN A CELL...
HOW MUCH CRAZIER CAN YOU GUYS GET, HUH!?
SHFF
HA.
CRAZY, ARE WE?
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT.
OH!
YOU'RE THAT GUY FROM BEFORE!
THANK YOU FOR STANDING GUARD.

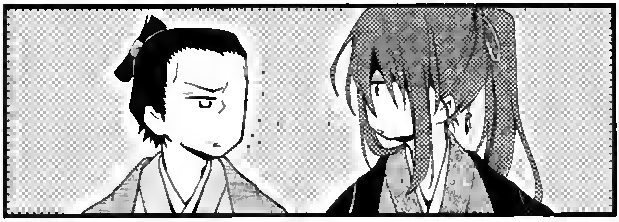
THIS IS THE SATSUMA MANSION IN EDO.
NOW, THEN.
I APOLOGIZE FOR OUR ROUGH BEHAVIOR EARLIER.
CREAK
ARE YOU ACTU-ALLY COMING IN!?
TO THIS DUMP!?
YOU CAN'T KEEP ME IN THIS DUMP FOR—
RATTLE
RATTLE
I AM SOUZOU SAGARA, THE HEAD OF THIS BAND OF ROSHI.
THIS IS MY VICE-CAPTAIN, JIROU MIZUHARA.
HUH?
OH...
WH-WHAT...
I DIDN'T EXPECT A FORMAL INTRODUCTION ALL OF A SUDDEN...
INTRO-DUCE YOURSELF IN TURN, KNAVE!!
SNARL
FLINCH
Y-YES!
YES, SIR!

I'M...
...KOTETSU MIYA-SAKA...
...SIR.
—I SEE.
KOTETSU MIYASAKA, EH?
IT SEEMS YOU'RE NO FOREIGNER, BUT—
HEY, UM... WHERE ARE WE!?
HM? MITA, IN EDO, BUT—
HUH? WE'RE IN MITA?

MUST BE A THEME PARK... IS THERE ONE HERE...?
?
MUMBLE
WELL, I WAS AT KAISEI ACADEMY IN MITA WHEN—
MUMBLE


O-OH, AND ...!
COULD YOU TELL ME THE WAY TO JR TAMACHI STATION?
"JAY... ARR"...?
OR MITA STATION ON THE TOEI LINE!?
WHICH-EVER ONE'S CLOS-ER!


SORRY, SAGARA!
YOU'VE GOTTA LET ME GO, QUICK!!



I'M SORRY, KOTETSU.
THESE THINGS YOU SAY...
...WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

.....

HUH!?
WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR—
.....

...THE YEAR 2017 ...
...ISN'T IT...?
FWIP
?
... HEY... THIS IS...
WHY, YOU ...!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR INSOLENT BACK TALK!!
NOW, NOW ...
CALM DOWN, MIZUHARA.
THAT SWORD WAS ALWAYS MINE!!
WHO'RE YOU CALLING A THIEF!?
FUME
WILL YOU GIVE IT A REST?
THE KNAVE SPEAKS IN RIDDLES...
IS HE PLAY-ACTING TO ESCAPE THE CONSEQUENCES OF HIS SWORD THIEVERY?
HMM?

I SHALL GIVE THIS WAKIZASHI TO YOU.
CLUNK
...VERY WELL.
HUH?
OH.
THANK YOU...
I MEAN, IT'S MINE ANYWAY, BUT...
WHA...!?
CAPTAIN !?
SHP
THUNK
IN THAT CASE, I SHALL GIVE YOU MY TACHI AS WELL.
KCHK

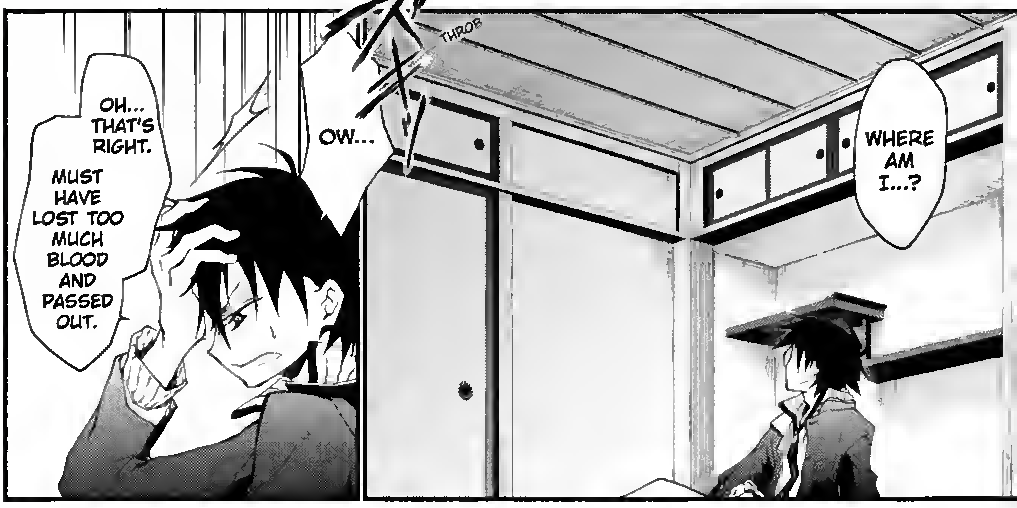
.....!!!
THAT'S... WHAT'S IT DOING HERE...!?
THIS TACHI ... I THREW IT AT HIM EARLIER ...
SCOLD
WHAT ARE YOU THINK-ING, SIR!?
ONE SUCH AS YOUR-SELF MUST REAL-LY—
NOW, NOW...
!
SCOLD
WHOA THERE, MIZUHARA
NOW THEN, KOTE-TSU.
I HAVE A REQUEST FOR YOU.
... TURNS OUT...
... SOME-THING WEIRD IS GOING ON AFTER ALL...
WOULD YOU HEAR ME OUT?
CLANK

!?
WHAT ...
...WAS THAT ...?
KOTE-TSU?
WHAT'S WRO—
H-HUH ...?
A NOSE-BLEED...?
SPURT
GRIP
—RA...
WAIT...
WOBBLE
MIZU-HARA!
YOUR KER-CHIEF!
WHAT ...
... WAS THAT ...?
SPATTER
SPATTER
THUD
BADUM
BADUM
SAGA-RA!
DON'T GO!!

BADUM
BADUM
SAGA-
RA!
DON'T
GO!!

!?
WHAT...
...WAS THAT...?
KOTE-TSU?
WHAT'S WRO—
H-HUH...?
A NOSE-BLEED...?
SPURT
GRIP
—RA...
WAIT...
WOBBLE
MIZU-HARA!
YOUR KER-CHIEF!
WHAT...
...WAS THAT...?
SPATTER
SPATTER
THUD

...?
ガ バッ
BOLT
!!
.....
FADE


THROB
OW...
WHERE AM I...?
OH... THAT'S RIGHT.
MUST HAVE LOST TOO MUCH BLOOD AND PASSED OUT.

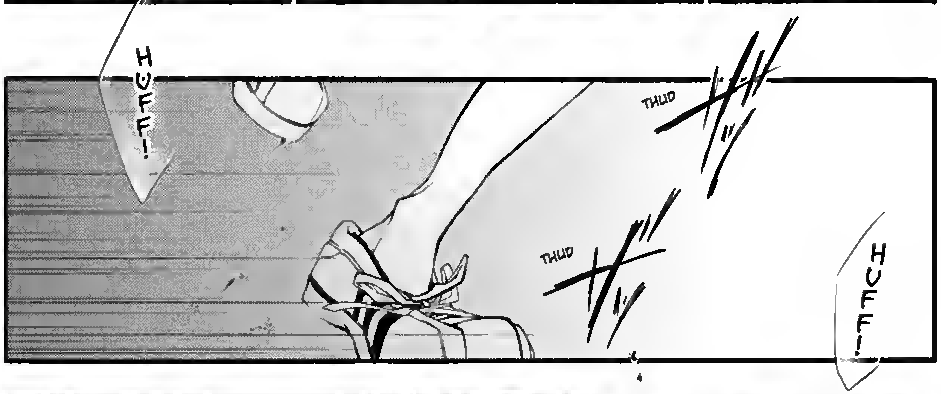
SILENCE
SNEAK
スス…
PEEK
ソロー

I DON'T EVEN SEE A MAID...
GULP
NOW'S MY CHANCE...!
THEY'RE NOT GONNA CATCH ME IF I'VE GOTTEN THIS FAR...
I'M GLAD I GOT AWAY. BUT I'M TOTALLY LOST... PLUS THESE STREETS...
NO CELL PHONE EITHER...

IS THIS WHAT IT'S LIKE AT EDO WONDER-LAND...?
IS IT A MOVIE SET...? BUT IT'S WAY TOO REALISTIC ...
...EDO... ...PERIOD ...?
—THE...
!?
A SCREAM!? FROM OVER THERE...!
EEEEEEE!
NO. NO WAY...
W-WE'RE BEING ROBBED ...! SOME-BODY, PLEASE ...!!
NO, NO.
IT CAN'T BE... CAN IT...?
WE'RE THE SATSUMA BRIGADE !!

PAY YOUR TAXES, OLD MAN!
OR WE'LL TAKE THE GIRL INSTEAD!!
PLEASE, PARDON US...!
WE HAVE NO MONEY TO SPARE IN THIS HOUSE ...
FORGIVE US, PLEASE ...!!
I BEG OF YOU...
THUMP
NOT GOOD ENOUGH!! YOU'RE COMING WITH US!
ARE YOU OKAY, MISTER?
THEY'RE THOSE SATSUMA THUGS...
A PACK OF MERE BANDITS WHO ONLY PRETEND TO BEAR THE SATSUMA NAME.
I BEG YOU...
...PLEASE TRY TO SAVE MY DAUGHTER...!!

WAIT HERE, MIS-TER!!
YOU MEAN THOSE GUYS!!?
SATSU-MA... WHERE HAVE I...? WAIT!


HUFF!
THUD
THUD
HUFF!

WHAT'S HIS DEAL...?

DAM-MIT...
THAT SAGA-RA...
HUFF!

SKSH
HEY!! LET THE LADY GO!
HA! IF YOU'RE GONNA BLAME ANYBODY, BLAME THE FOLKS UP-STAIRS—
PLEASE, RETURN ME TO MY FATHER'S HOUSE...!
I BEG YOU ...!
OH-HO! SHE'S A REAL BEAUTY, BOYS!
SHE'LL SELL FOR A FINE PRICE!
HUNH?
YOU LOOKIN' FOR A THRASHIN', BRAT!?
YOU'RE THE WORST!! I'M HANDING YOU OVER TO THE POLICE!
HUH!? WHAT'S HE TALKIN' ABOUT?
I DIDN'T THINK YOU GUYS WERE THE TYPE TO PULL CRAP LIKE THIS...
SHUT UP! YOU'RE THE ONES WHO ARE GONNA GET—
GROPE

URAAAH!
WHO CARES! JUST KILL HIM!!
DASH
PALE
THRASHED ...?
GRAAAH!
COME BACK HERE, YOU BRAT!!
SORRY, LADY!
DAMMIT!!
UNARMED! WHAT AM I, AN IDIOT!!
HRAAH!!
ACK!
A DEAD END!!

AH...
OW...!
SCUTTLE
SWISH
DIE!

...
SAGA
...
...RA...
WHOOSH
GYAAAAH!!
KOTE-
TSU!!
ARRGH...
DRIP
IT'S
YOUR
SWORD!
TAKE
IT UP!

WHOOSH
GYAAAAAH!!
KOTE-TSU!!
ARRGH...
DRIP
IT'S YOUR SWORD!
TAKE IT UP!

...
SAGA
...
...RA...

WHOOSH
YES, SIR!
CHOMP
KOTE-TSU!
SHIBU-YA!
FLINCH
HURL
CAPTURE THE REST OF THE BAND!
MARUHASHI, GUARD THE LADY AND ESCORT HER HOME!
Y...
YOU GUYS!
SKSH
AFTER ALL THAT SNOOTY TALK ABOUT FIGHTING WITH ONE WILL...
...YOU'RE JUST ROBBERS, AREN'T YOU!? THIS IS A CRIME!!

DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA.
THEY'RE JUST A PACK OF INSOLENT THIEVES, MISUSING THE NAME OF OUR BAND
KOTE-TSU.
SURELY YOU CAN MOVE WITH SUCH A TRIVIAL WOUND?
HUH?
OH.
YEAH ...!
WHOOSH
THEN HELP US...
...PUNISH THESE SCOUN-DRELS!!
KCHK
TWO FINE GENTLE-MEN AND A LITTLE BOY...
HA HA.
THIS'LL BE EASY.
STILL, CHASING AFTER ROBBERS UNARMED ...
I ADMIRE YOUR SPIRIT!

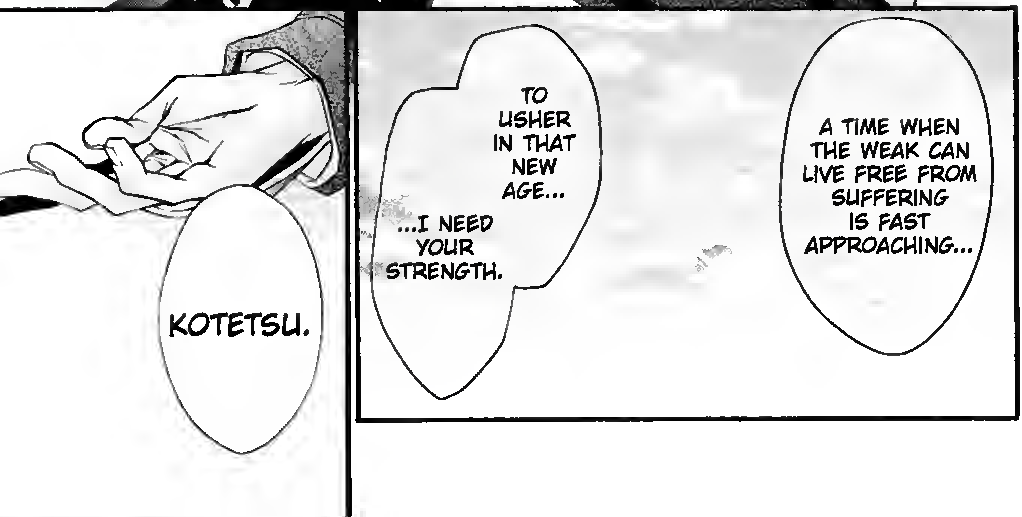
WHOOSH
DON'T... CALL ME...
YOU MAY BE SMALL OF FRAME...
...BUT YOU HAVE INCREDIBLE RESOLVE!
CLANG
...SMALL!
WHISH
I'M GONNA GET TALLER SOME-DAY!
KSHING
TCH ...
D...
DON'T FALL BACK! GET 'EM!!

GAAH, C'MON!
QUIT TALKING! WE'RE IN DANGER HERE!
THAT WILL BE A SIGHT TO SEE.
WILL YOU?
CLANG
COME NOW, KOTE-TSU!!
DON'T GET DIS-TRACTED!
WHOA!
HA...!
SAME TO YOU!

PHEW...
FWIP
AYE-AYE!
KCHK
TAKE THEM TO THE MANSION FOR QUESTION-ING.
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT THEM ALL.
TUG
.....
YOU HAVE A GOOD FACE.
YEAH...?
HUH? WHA...?
WH-
WHOA...
THUMP

SSK
I HAVE A REQUEST FOR YOU...
...AS I SAID BEFORE.
HUH...?
YOU KNOW ... LIVE STEEL IS ACTUALLY... PRETTY HEAVY...
HA HA...

WON'T YOU JOIN OUR BAND?


KOTETSU.
...I NEED YOUR STRENGTH.
TO USHER IN THAT NEW AGE...
A TIME WHEN THE WEAK CAN LIVE FREE FROM SUFFERING IS FAST APPROACHING...

WHY DON'T WE TRY AND CHANGE THE WORLD TOGETHER?

—TOO BRIGHT...
THE SUN-RISE.
BEHIND YOU...
AHH...
IS IT THAT HOUR ALREADY ...?
SAGARA...
YOU'RE...

...A REAL WEIRDO...

TAP
—AND THOSE...
...ARE THE MAIN DUTIES OF OUR BAND OF ROSHI.

YEAH...
I GET THE IDEA.
BUT...
...I CAN'T DO IT.
DOOM

THE INEQUALITIES OF THE CLASS SYSTEM ARE TO BLAME...
THE COLLECTION OF EXTRAVAGANT TAXES CAUSES UNENDING SORROW FOR THE POOR.
IT MUST NOT BE ALLOWED

HM?
IS THE PAY NOT ENOUGH?
RUMMAGE RUMMAGE
I COULD ADD ANOTHER FIVE RYO...
HOW MUCH IS A RYO WORTH ANYWAY!?
IT'S NOT THAT!
QUIT DIGGING IN YOUR SLEEVE!
I MEAN, I CAN'T DO STUFF LIKE THAT!!

NO, I GET THAT THE SHOGUNATE IS BAD!
BUT THAT'S THE THING...
WE MIGHT HAVE TO KILL PEOPLE, RIGHT!?
TO ME, THAT'S A CRIME!
WITH A CAP-ITAL "C"!!
GET IT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IT'S A SIN HERE IN EDO AS WELL.
A SIN...?
BUT TO US, IT'S A MATTER OF JUSTICE AND THE GREATER GOOD.

LISTEN, SAGARA... SAN?
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, SEE?
HEY, ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?
SWISH
WHAT WE NEED NOW IS POWER.
THE POWER OF YOUTH TO FORGE THE COMING ERA.

YES!
BIRTH AND LINEAGE HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH IT...
WE NEED YOUNG LIONS FOR A NEW JAPAN!
AND BY THAT...
...I MEAN YOU, KOTETSU!
GLEAM
CLENCH

KOTE-TSU..?
KOTETSU-CHAN, WHERE DID YOU GO!!?
SILENCE
...KO-TETSU?
ALONE
I DUNNO MUCH JAPANESE HISTORY...
RIGHT AROUND... THE BA-KUMATSU, SO... 1860-ISH, RIGHT?
THIS REALLY MUST BE THE EDO PERIOD....
THE SATSUMA CLAN....
THE SHO-GUN-ATE ...
SHFF
WELL...
TOO BAD FOR SAGARA, BUT...
...THERE'S NO WAY I CAN HELP HIM OUT—
WHAT THE HELL AM I GONNA DO NOW...?
TMP
TMP
TMP

WHAM
ドッ
BFRGH!
!?
THUMP
ズテッ
OW...
HUH!?

...YA...!

YAYOI
...!!?

Scarlet
EMPIRE

I'M SOUJI SHIBUYA!
HAPPY TO MEET YOU, KOTETSU-CHAN!
I'M NISHI-MURA.
NICE TO BE WORKING WITH YOU.
...
SO, UH...
WHAT?

WHAT ARE THESE GUYS DOING HERE!!?
WELCOME!
HUH?
HOW MUCH DO YOU EAT..?
Chapter 3: The Winds of Beginning
SIGN: SWEET CAKES
AND YOU!!
HM?
POINT
OH! THOSE LOOK GOOD~

WHY WEAR ALL THAT!!?
HMM...? BUT I USUALLY WEAR MORE...
IF YOU'RE TOO HOT, TAKE SOME OFF!!
THOUGH IT IS A BIT HOT...
YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT!?

HAVE A DUMPLING!!
HOW COME YOU'RE SO GRUMPY, HUH?
C'MON!
PWIMP
FWIP
HEY
GET OFF ME!
I DON'T WANT ANY!

SMOOSH
むぐぐ…

YOU SAID THIS WAS A MISSION, BUT YOU'RE JUST GOOFING OFF!!
OH, MY.
WHAT THE HELL IS WITH YOU!?

AND THAT GUY!!
WHY'D HE HAVE TO GO AND REJECT ME LIKE THAT?
GAAH, IT MAKES ME SO MAD!
RAGE
OHH... DOES "HIM" HE MEAN OOKI...?
HE SURE IS PITCHING A FIT...
SO THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ABOUT...

OOKI IS JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE RIGID THAN THE REST OF US.
IT MUST HAVE PUT HIS HACKLES UP TO HAVE A STRANGER ACT SO FAMILIAR.

A "STRANGER"...
"THE REST OF US"? DON'T LUMP ME IN WITH YOU.
OH! SOME CANDY PLEASE, MA'AM!!
COMING RIGHT UP!

SWISH
SWISH
FREEZE
YOU'RE TOO QUICK TO DRAW YOUR BLADE.
YOU OUGHT TO BREAK THAT HABIT, OOKI.

I KNOW.
BUT...
...KIKUCHI.
...YA...!
YAYOI...!!?
...SOMETHING ABOUT HIM...
KSHING
...GETS ON MY NERVES.

...WHO ARE YOU?
"WHO"? IT'S ME!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!?
!!
GRAB
HUH...!?
SMACK
WAIT, YAYO—
DON'T TOUCH ME SO CASUALLY! I DON'T KNOW YOU!!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
KSHING

MY NAME IS SHIROU OOKI!!
AND I'LL TAKE NO FURTHER DISRESPECT FROM YOU!!
...WHAT ...?
OOKI, STOP IT!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!!?
WHAT ARE YOU SPORTING AT NOW?
ARE YOU HURT?
WHAT? NO...

CAPTAIN...
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU, KOTETSU!
IN TROUBLE AGAIN, EH?
URK... SAGARA...
!!
GRAB
IT'S A BIT SUDDEN, BUT I HAVE A MISSION FOR YOU.
LET'S GO.
...SAGARA-SAN...
...WHY...?
PEEK
OH-HO!!
I SMELL... AN OUTING!!
DRAG
DRAG
LET- ME GO!
FLAIL
FLAIL
PEEK
LOOKS LIKE WE OUGHT TO BE HEADING OUT TOO... (OOKI'S GONNA HAVE A FIT.)
I WAS WATCHING
...IS HE WITH THE CAPTAIN !!!?
WAH...
CAP- TAIN... PLEASE BE A BIT QUIET- ER...
WAIT, WAIT!! QUIT DRAGGING ME ALONG!
WHUMP
BANG BANG
CRASH

"OOKI," HUH... IS HE REALLY NOT YAYOI?
HE COULD'VE GOTTEN WARPED BACK IN TIME TOO...
H-HEY...
TELL ME MORE ABOUT HIM, WOULD YOU?
DID OOKI EVER SAY ANYTHING ABOUT HIS REAL NAME BEING YAYOI MIYASAKA? HOW OLD IS HE?
DOES HE HAVE ANY FAMILY?
HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN HERE!?
UMM... HUH...
GIVE IT UP, WOULD YOU? YOU DID JUST ENLIST, AFTER ALL, SO...
...WH-WHAT'S WRONG...?
YOU'RE SCARING ME...
OH-HO!! I SEEEEE!
YOU...
TURN
GAH!

YOU'VE TAKEN A FANCY TO OOKI!
WHAT!!?
SHOCK
PFFT!
IT'S A BIT SOON FOR THAT, ISN'T IT?
WAIT, WAIT! WHERE'D YOU GET THAT IDEA!?
THAT'S A CRAZY JUMP TO MAKE!!
DON'T BOTHER PURSUING HIM.
HE MAY BE LOVELIER THAN ANY WOMAN... BUT HE HAS THE TEMPER OF A MAN AMONG MEN.
TRY TO LAY A HAND ON HIM, AND HE'LL ONLY BITE IT OFF.
NOD
NOD
WHAT THE HELL!!? I'M NOT GONNA LAY MY HANDS ON HIM!!
OH! SO YOU PREFER WOMEN, KOTETSU-CHAN?
I SEE, I SEE!
DON'T PUT IT LIKE THAT!
YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG!!
ANY-WAY, THIS OOKI GUY...
HE LOOKS A LOT LIKE MY LITTLE BROTHER, SO I'M CURIOUS ABOUT HIM. THAT'S ALL!
OHHH? YOU MEAN YOU DON'T?
I'M A LITTLE SURPRISED!
HMPH, HOW BORING.
WELL, EXCUSE ME....
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
WHAT'S THEIR DEAL ANYWAY...?
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES...?

ANYWAY, SAGARA!!
YOU SAID I "JUST ENLISTED," BUT I HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING ABOUT JOINING UP WITH YOU YET!
KOTETSU-CHAN, BEHIND YOU!!
THUMP
DROP
ポロッ…
CRASH
GAH...
AW, MAN...
LOOM
HEY.
WHADDAYA THINK YOU'RE DOIN', BRAT?

SAYIN' YOU'RE SORRY WON'T FIX NOTHIN'!
HUH?
M-MY BAD...
I APOLOGIZE FOR MY RETAINER'S CARELESS-NESS.
PERHAPS THIS WILL HELP YOU FIND IT IN YOURSELF TO FORGIVE US.
CLINK
HUH?
THAT'S...
RUSTLE
F...
FIVE HUNDRED MON...!?
(*ABOUT ¥50 IN MODERN CURRENCY.)
S-SAGARA-SAN!
IT WASN'T EVEN WORTH A HUNDRED!!
NAH...
I DON'T THINK THAT'LL COVER IT.
SMIRK
TRY SEVEN HUN-DRED MON!
...WHY, YOU—
NO, NO!
NINE HUNDRED MON!
HA.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!!
WH...
WHAT THE...?
I SEE...
SHOW WEAKNESS, AND YOU'LL BE MET WITH STRENGTH.
...WHAT A SHAME. BUT...
...YOU HAVE REAL NERVE...
...TO TRY TO DECEIVE ME.

IF YOU WANT MONEY SO BADLY...
...GO ON!
COME AND TAKE IT FROM ME!
...WHAT THE HELL!? IS HE MOCKIN' US!?
GET HIM!!
WHUMP
THUMP
WHAM
CRACK

WHACK
WHAT'S WRONG!?
HAVEN'T GOT THE GUTS TO FIGHT, YER LORD-SHIP!!?
HMPH
YOU'VE A FINE PUNCH.
HUH?
SMIRK
BUT...
...YOU'RE PUTTING IT TO THE WRONG USE.
...!
WHAT'S WITH HIM...?
HE'S LAUGHIN' AT US...
RUSH
NO!
SAGARA-SA—
STAY OUT OF THIS!!

GO AHEAD, HIT ME!
IS THAT ALL THE STRENGTH YOU HAVE!?
WHA ...?
IF YOU WON'T COME TO ME...
...I'LL GO TO YOU.
GRAB
WHISH
!?
TRIP
SPLAT
ARGH !!

EEE ...!!
BOSS!!
THNK
DO YOU ALWAYS EARN YOUR LIVING LIKE THIS?
...I-I'M SORRY! PLEASE LET ME GO!!
I GIVE UP!
I'LL NEVER DO IT AGAIN !!
DO YOU GIVE UP...?
IF SO, SWEAR RIGHT HERE THAT YOU'LL NEVER PULL ANOTHER CROOKED STUNT.

HUH?
KO-TETSU.
HOLD THIS FOR ME.
TOSS
DEAR, DEAR...
B...
BOSS!
...!?
FLING
WH...
WHAT'S HE DOING NOW...!?
RUSTLE

FLAP
FLUTTER
PAT

FLAP
FLUTTER
PAT

USE YOUR STRENGTH ...
...FOR THE SAKE OF THE NATION.
I AM SOUZOU SAGARA.
IF YOU LACK MONEY FOR FOOD, SELL THESE TO SUPPORT YOURSELVES.
IF THAT STILL ISN'T ENOUGH, COME FIND ME AT THE SATSUMA MANSION IN MITA.
—THE CAPTAIN'S BEEN GATHERING PEOPLE IN ALL SORTS OF WAYS.
NO ONE CAN COMPARE TO OUR CAPTAIN.
...THERE ARE SOME THINGS ONLY HE CAN SEE.
IT MIGHT SEEM RECKLESS, BUT...

WOW...
REALLY? YOU THINK SO?
THE CAPTAIN RESCUED US ALL FROM TIGHT SPOTS TOO.
HE CHARMED US INTO JOINING HIS FIGHT WITH SHEER PERSONALITY.
SAGARA!
HERE...
HE WORE ALL THOSE CLOTHES JUST TO GIVE THEM AWAY LIKE THAT...?
SEARCH
SEARCH
NOW THAT IT'S QUIET, I'M HUNGRY...
HUH?
GRGL
HM?
MY HAORI JACKET...
WHERE DID IT GO...?
HM?
...WHY D'YOU RISK LIFE AND LIMB LIKE THAT TO WIN PEOPLE OVER?
BUT, UH...
ER, ARE YOU LISTENING?
IT'S MY FAULT YOU GOT BEAT UP...
UH...
SORRY...
I COULD NEVER GIVE THIS ONE AWAY...
SNATCH
OH, HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU?
SNUGGLE SNUGGLE

OCTOBER 17, KYOTO
IT BEGAN WITH A CONVERSATION I HAD ABOUT A MONTH AGO....
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
!?
UH... SURE...
FLINCH
WHIRL
THE SHOGUNATE MAY BE USING A BAND OF ASSASSINS
I'VE HEARD RUMORS THEY ARE TRYING TO TAKE THE LIFE OF LORD SAKAMOTO.
THOSE RUMORS HAVE REACHED MY EARS AS WELL....
...LORD SAIGOU.

LORD SAGARA!
WON'T YOU LEND YOUR STRENGTH TO THE CAUSE?
LORD SAKAMOTO IS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THIS PLAN OF RENEWAL. TO STRIKE AT HIM WOULD BE A TRULY DESPICABLE ACT!!
WE MUST TAKE UP ARMS AGAINST THE SHOGUNATE AT ONCE TO END THEIR TYRANNY!!
...AND THE IMPERIAL RESTORATION WILL BRING ABOUT THE DAWN OF A NEW AGE...
THE SHOGUNATE WILL FINALLY RELINQUISH ITS AUTHORITY TO THE EMPEROR...
...TO GO TO WAR...
...WOULD WIN US NO FAVORS FROM LORD SAKAMOTO. GIVEN HIS DEVOTION TO THE RESTORATION AT THE RISK OF HIS OWN LIFE.
I UNDER-STAND THAT!
BUT...
...HOW CAN WE CONTINUE TO SIT BY AND IGNORE THE SHOGUNATE'S TYRANNY?

—WE MUST FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE...
!?
I SHALL RECRUIT ROSHI IN EDO...
...AND FIGHT BACK AGAINST ALL THE EVIL DEEDS OF THE SHOGUNATE.
YOU WOULDN'T ...!
EDO IS UNDER THE VERY THUMB OF THE SHOGUNATE!! YOU'D BE LEAPING INTO YOUR OWN GRAVE!!
THERE'S NO CALL TO EXPOSE A SKILLED WARRIOR SUCH AS YOURSELF TO SUCH DANGER...!
I AM SOMETHING OF A PATRIOT MYSELF...
I COULD ACCOMPLISH NOTHING FOR JAPAN IF I WERE NOT PREPARED TO LAY DOWN MY LIFE
ALLOW ME TO TAKE COMMAND IN YOUR STEAD
WHY SHOULD ONE BORN TO A GOOD FAMILY, ONE WHO LIVES FREE OF WANT...
...RISK HIS OWN SAFETY IN DOING THIS?

EVEN IF MY BODY SHOULD BE STAINED SCARLET...
...THERE IS NOTHING I WOULD NOT DO FOR THE SAKE OF THE EMPIRE.
...WHAT MATTERS MOST IS NOT THE TIME NOR CIRCUMSTANCES OF A MAN'S BIRTH...
...BUT WHAT USE HE CHOOSES TO MAKE OF HIS LIFE.
...LORD SAGARA, YOU FEEL NEITHER FEAR NOR DOUBT.
NEVER BEFORE HAVE I SEEN A MAN OF SUCH COURAGE.
IF YOU WISH IT, PLEASE USE THE SATSUMA MANSION IN EDO.

.....
UH... WHAT...?
AWW.
THERE HE GOES...
DRUNK ON HIS PAST GLORIES.
HE'S JUST STANDING THERE SMIRKING... IS HE OKAY?
HAHH...

.....

.....
RUSTLE

WELL!?
AREN'T YOU GONNA ANSWER ME!?
SNAP OUT OF IT!
HUH...?
HEY, SAGARA!
HEYY!
WAVE
WAVE

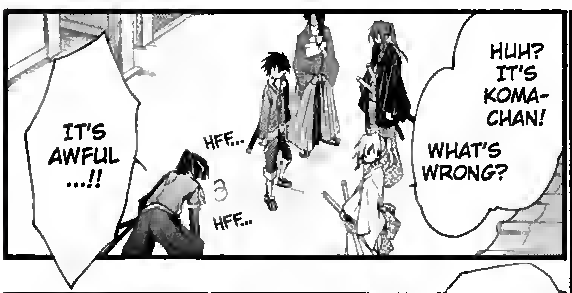
IT'S A SECRET.
WHAT!?
THAT'S IT?

ARRRRGH!!!
!?
WHAT WAS THAT ...!?
DASH
IT CAME FROM THE BACK GARDEN!!
WHAT'S WRONG!?
I HEARD A CRY—
SLAM

...WHERE IS SAGARA?
YOU BAS-TARD.. HOW DARE YOU ...!!?
DRIP
WHO ARE YOU ...!!?
KSHINGGG

KSHINK
DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH !!!
STOMP
STOMP
YAMADA!
WHAT'S GOING ON!!?
THERE'S AN INTRUDER IN THE MANSION! HE'S CUTTING DOWN MEN LEFT AND RIGHT...!!
WHAT!!?

CALL KOMATSU!
SEND HIM TO THE CAPTAIN TO INFORM HIM OF THE SITUATION, QUICKLY!!
YES, SIR!!


HUH? IT'S KOMA-CHAN!
WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S AWFUL ...!!
HFF..
HFF...

CAPTAIN!!

A MAN WHO SAYS HE'S AN AZUMAYA YOJIMBO HAS BROKEN INTO THE MANSION!
HE'S CUTTING DOWN MEN LEFT AND RIGHT—
HE'S WHAT!?

BACK TO THE MANSION!
SO THEY'VE CAUGHT WIND THAT WE'RE KEEPING AN EYE ON THEM...
THE AZUMAYA?
THOSE GREEDY MONEY CHANGERS WHO DO BUSINESS WITH THE SHOGUNATE!!?

DAMN HIM...!!
STMP
STMP
STMP
STMP
SO YOU'RE THE ONE...
!!
YAYOI ...!
KCHK

—HMPH.
THINGS ARE HEATING UP.
CLACK
I DO HOPE NO MORE OF YOU WILL COME NOSING AROUND AFTER ME.
HRAH!!
WHOOSH
DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK JUST BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT THE SHOGUNATE BACKING YOU UP!!
KCHK
...!!!

I DO HOPE YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THAT.

A PACK OF RONIN LIKE YOU...
HMPH ...

...CAN BE SNUFFED OUT WITH IMPUNITY AT ANY TIME.

HMPH ...
A PACK OF RONIN LIKE YOU...
...CAN BE SNUFFED OUT WITH IMPUNITY AT ANY TIME.

I DO HOPE YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THAT.

I'VE BEEN LOOK-ING FOR YOU...
...SAGA-RA.
CHIHIRO KAWASE ...!?
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE...!?
WHAT DOES AN AZUMAYA YOJIMBO WANT WITH US?
I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO LAY A HAND ON ANOTHER ONE OF MY MEN...!
CAPTAIN...!!

# Chapter 4: Youthful Pride

CAP-TAIN ...!
FALL BACK, OOKI.
IT SEEMS THIS KNAVE HAS BUSI-NESS WITH ME.
BUT SIR...!
PLEASE, LET ME FINISH HIM!!
YOU LEFT ME IN CHARGE, AND I FAILED YOU...!
HOW CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME... !!?
YOU MAY HAVE CHANGED YOUR NAME AND TAKEN COMMAND OF A ROSHI BAND...
SAGA-RA...
...BUT YOU'RE STILL NOTHING MORE THAN THE SON OF A COUNTRY SAMURAI!!
YOUR PLAYING AT BEING A REAL WARRIOR IS ABSURD!!
CLENCH
WHY, YOU ...!
...
OH HO...
CLICK

DON'T INSULT OUR CAPTAIN!!
DASH
CLANG

HUFF!
HUFF!
GNH ...
SKID
CLANG
NH!
HE'S TOO MUCH FOR YOU!!
YAYOI—
OOKI!!
WAIT, NO...
GRAB
MMPH!
JUST FALL BACK AND—
I'LL TAKE HIM DOWN!
WHAT!!?

THWACK
YOU FOOL!
RILING HIM UP WILL ONLY MAKE IT—
THIS IS MY JOB...!!
DON'T MAKE ME SAY IT AGAIN ... MY NAME IS OOKI.
I HAVE NO NEED OF A SECOND.

DASH
CLANG

YOU...
ARE YOU SAGARA'S LITTLE PET...?
SKRRSH
FWIP
WHAT ...!!!?
CLANG

NO!..!
SWISH
OOK!!!!
DON'T MOVE!!

I'M SURE YOU CAN IMAGINE...
...WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF YOU DO?
...!!
SWSHHH
...OH!
DEAR ME, YOUR RIGHT IS YOUR DOMINANT ARM, ISN'T IT...?
SMIRK
STOP
SHWIP
KCHK

YOU ARE A FOOLISH CHILD WHO COULDN'T EVEN AVOID ENDING UP IN THIS MESS
...!!
SLICE
DRIP
SLICE
SPURT
WAFT
!
I SMELL GUN-POWDER ...
BLAM
...YOUR CAUSE WILL ALWAYS BE LOST!!
DAMN ... YOU ...!
ULTI-MATE-LY...
...YOU WEAKLINGS MAY FLOCK TOGETHER, BUT...

.....
A RIFLE, EH...?
LEAP
CLATTER
LUNGE
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!?
OOK!!
CHAK
TCH...
I MISSED ...!!

GOOD OLD VICE-CAPTAIN MIZU-HARA!
DON'T WASTE TIME WITH CHAT-TER!!
THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO—
RUSTLE
SWISH

BOOM
!!?
WHOOSH
SMOKE ...!?
.....
!!!
HE'S GONE ...!!
HEH HEH HEH...

SAGA-RA!!
IT STARTS TODAY!
!?
ON THIS VERY DAY, THE DAY OF OUR FIRST MEETING ...
...YOUR PERSON-AL HELL BEGINS !!
BWA HA HA HA HA!

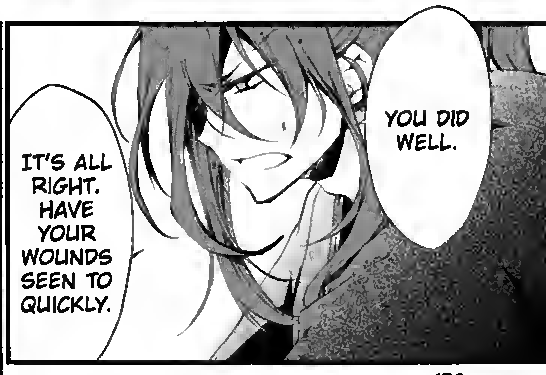
HEY! ARE YOU OKAY!?
OOKI !!!

SLUMP
OOKI !!

... CAP-TAIN...

I'VE FAILED YOU UTTER-LY...
I...!!

SMACK
HERE, SHOW ME YOUR ARM!!
...DON'T TOUCH ME!


YOU DID WELL.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. HAVE YOUR WOUNDS SEEN TO QUICKLY.

SHUT UP AND LET ME SEE IT NOW !!
AND WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING !!?
CALL AN AMBU-LANCE, QUICK!!
.....???
NAM-BYOO...
...LANCE ...?
CARRY THEM TO THE HALL, STARTING WITH THE MOST SEVERELY WOUNDED!
—YOU ...
HURRY AND TREAT THEM!!
YES, SIR!

YOU BAS-TARD...
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ME...

OUT OF MY WAY...

CLENCH
...HE DELIBERATELY LEFT MY SWORD ARM UNHURT...
THAT YOJIMBO ...
IF HE'D WANTED TO KILL ME, I'D BE DEAD.
WHAT'S MORE...
...SO HUMILIATED...!!!
I'VE NEVER BEEN...
YES, SIR!
SEND WORD QUICKLY TO IMUTA AND MASUMITSU, OUR ALLIES IN THE SATSUMA CLAN!
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TARRY!
MIZU-HARA!

UM...
WHO ARE THESE AZUMAYA GUYS ANYWAY?
TMP
TMP
TMP
THE AZUMAYA ARE MONEY CHANGERS WHO WORK WITH THE SHOGUNATE.
THEY'RE WELL-KNOWN AS VICIOUS USURERS WHO GREEDILY COLLECT ON THEIR DEBTS.
THAT'S ALL OUR INQUIRIES HAVE TURNED UP ON THEM SO FAR...
BUT THAT MAN'S RAID ON OUR BASE MAKES NO SENSE.
A YOJIMBO'S JOB IS TO DEFEND AGAINST OUTSIDE FOES.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT!
IT WAS VERY STRANGE, THE WAY HE ATTACKED US!
OH... WAS IT...?
BUT DIDN'T IT LOOK LIKE THAT YOJIMBO KNEW SAGARA ALREADY?
I'LL PUT THE BANDAGES HERE.
THANK YOU, KOTETSU-KUN.
CLUNK
IT DID SEEM THAT WAY.
THOUGH THE CAPTAIN DIDN'T SEEM TO KNOW HIM...

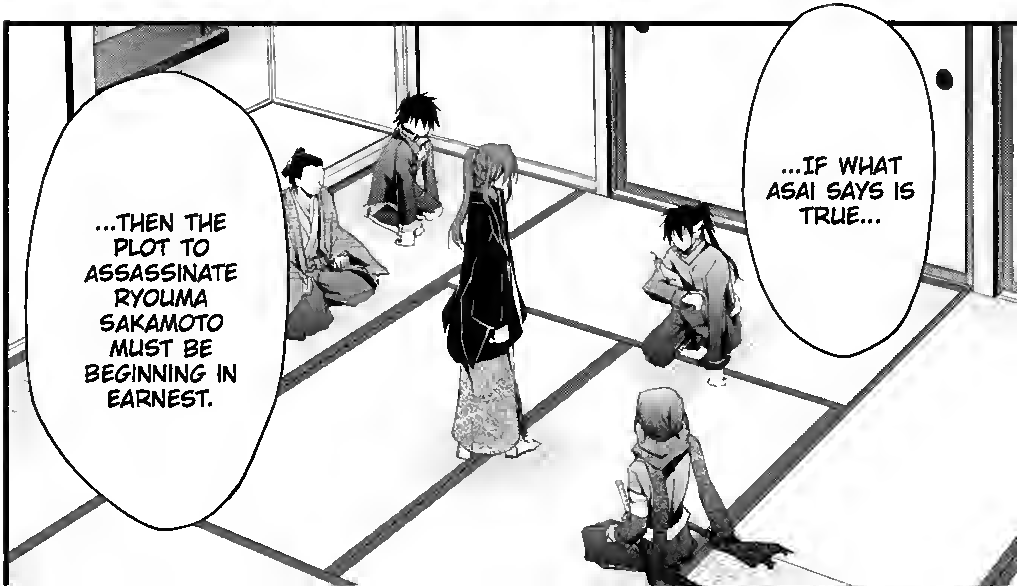
I'M GONNA ASK SAGARA!
I'VE GOT MY OWN REASONS TO BE INTERESTED IN THAT FOUR-EYED GUY.
"INTERESTED"!? WHAT, AGAIN?
OH MY, KOTTE CHAN!
PFFT!
THE LAD FALLS FAST... TYPICAL.
HEH HEH HEH...
NOW, WAIT JUST A MINUTE!
CAPTAIN.
VICE-CAPTAIN.
I FAILED YOU TODAY.
HOW CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME...!!?

.....
YES, SIR.
THAT AZUMAYA YOJIMBO... I SWEAR I...!
DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELF OVER IT. YOU WEREN'T AT FAULT.
I'M SIMPLY GLAD YOU WEREN'T SERIOUSLY WOUNDED.
SLIDE
SHUT
PARDON ME.
YES, SIR!
ASAI? COME IN.
CAPTAIN!! I BRING URGENT NEWS!
THUMP THUMP
THE RESULTS OF OUR COVERT INVESTIGATION INTO THE AZUMAYA FINANCES AND CUSTOMERS HAVE JUST ARRIVED!!
...!!!
THE GROUP OF YOJIMBO HIRED WITH THE AZUMAYAS' ILL-GOTTEN MONEY...
THEY'RE THE VERY SAME GROUP THAT'S PLOTTING TO MURDER LORD SAKAMOTO!!
!!!

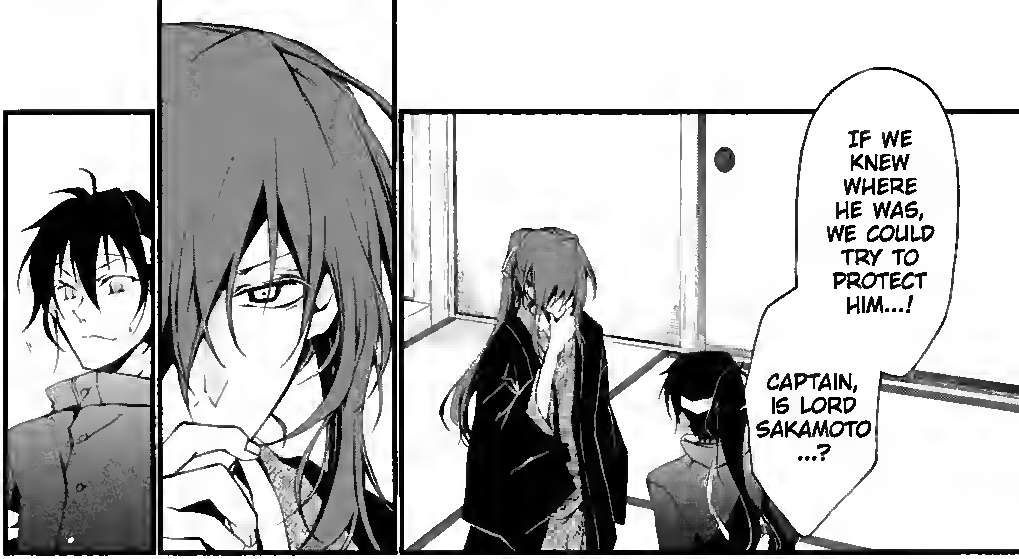
SHI-KYOU KA-WA-SE!
SNEAK
OH! IT'S SAGA-RA!
THEY'RE ABOUT A HUNDRED STRONG.
AND THEIR STAFF OFFICER IS THE VERY MAN WE JUST MET...
SHI-KYOU ... KA-WASE ...
SO HE'S...
SLAM
HANG ON ...!!
DID YOU JUST SAY "KA-WASE" !?
HEY, TELL ME!!!
YOU AGAIN! YOU NOISY BRAT...
WE'RE BUSY! AWAY WITH YOU!!
...OH, KOTE-TSU.
IT'S ALL RIGHT ... COME IN.
CAP-TAIN...
.....

KO-TE-TSU.
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT SHIKYOU KAWASE?
SIT DOWN, YOU ILL-MANNERED CHILD!
UM... WELL... THIS "SHI-KYOU" GUY?
I KNOW ANOTHER GUY WHO LOOKS JUST LIKE HIM.
HIS LAST NAME IS "KAWASE" TOO, SO I WAS KINDA SURPRISED ...
.....
I SEE ...

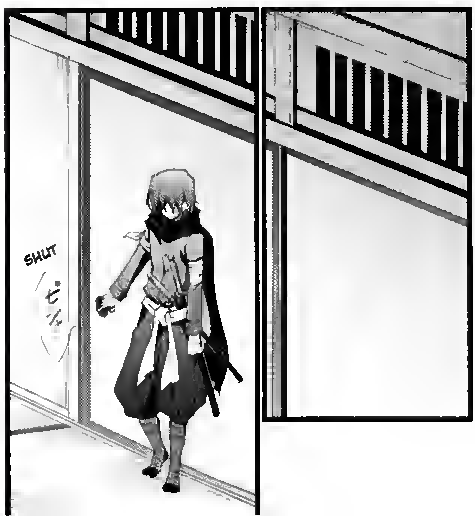
ASAI.
YOU'VE DONE WELL.
PAT
...!!!
SMIRK


...IF WHAT ASAI SAYS IS TRUE...
...THEN THE PLOT TO ASSASSINATE RYOUMA SAKAMOTO MUST BE BEGINNING IN EARNEST.

SHOCK
ガ"ー!!
"RYOUMA" ...!?
...YOU MEAN HIM!?
THE RYOUMA SAKAMOTO WHO WAS ASSASSI-NATED!!!?
CAP-TAIN!
WHERE IS LORD SAKAMOTO NOW!?
DON'T SPEAK SO RASHLY !!
LORD SAKAMOTO IS IN PERFECT HEALTH!!
HUH?
OH SORRY ..
AND SIT DOWN!
CLENCH
THAT'S RIGHT...!!
ASAI ISN'T A LEADER, SO HE DOESN'T KNOW LORD SAKAMOTO IS IN KYOTO!!


IF WE KNEW WHERE HE WAS, WE COULD TRY TO PROTECT HIM...!
CAPTAIN, IS LORD SAKAMOTO ...?

SHUFFLE
I'LL HASTEN THE PREPARATIONS.
ALL OF YOU, WITHDRAW FOR NOW.
SHWP


SHUT

DRAG
DRAG
YOU'D BEST WITHDRAW AS WELL, MIYASAKA!!
AWW...

SHIKYOU KAWASE...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN HIM AND THE CAPTAIN IN THE PAST, BUT...
...I WON'T LET HIM HAVE HIS WAY!!
I HAVE TO TELL LORD SAIGOU IN KYOTO AT ONCE...
...AND ASK HIM TO PROTECT LORD SAKAMOTO ...!!
CLATTER
YES, SIR!
I'M RELYING ON YOU.
SEE THAT IT REACHES HIM.
I'LL DO MY BEST...
...TO PROTECT THE CAPTAIN'S HONOR...!!

—AT THIS POINT...
...I CAN'T KEEP PRE-TENDING THIS ISN'T REAL...
PLOD
I DON'T KNOW WHY OR HOW, BUT...
...THIS REALLY ISN'T THE ERA I WAS BORN IN, IS IT...?
RYOUMA SAKAMOTO IS ALIVE... SO THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT...
THIS IS THE EDO PERIOD...

OOKI LOOKS JUST LIKE YAYOI, BUT THEY'RE DIFFERENT PEOPLE...
BUT THAT GUY BEING NAMED "KAWASE" CAN'T BE A COINCI-DENCE...
.....

WHAT AM I MEANT TO DO HERE...?
IS THERE REALLY NO WAY FOR ME TO GET OUT OF HERE...?
HOW DID I END UP IN THE EDO PERIOD?

RUSTLE
SO SAKAMOTO IS IN KYOTO...
I SEE...
HEH HEH HEH...

*Scarlet Empire* 1 *End*

# AFTERWORD

NICE TO MEET YOU! I'M THE ARTIST, HIKARU TANAKA. THANKS SO MUCH FOR PICKING UP OUR BOOK!

THIS WAS MY FIRST TIME IN PRINT, MY FIRST TIME GETTING SERIALIZED, AND PRETTY MUCH MY FIRST TIME DRAWING TRADITIONAL JAPANESE COSTUMES, WHICH IS KIND OF STRANGE, SINCE MY PARENTS RAN A KIMONO FABRIC SHOP.

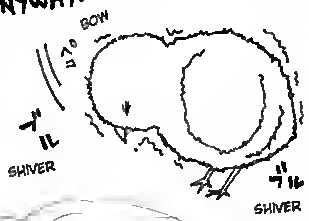
SO DID THE STORY THRILL YOU AT ALL (ARTISTICALLY SPEAKING, AT LEAST)...? I WANT KOTETSU TO WORK HARD AND DO HIS BEST, SO ALL YOU READERS CAN RELAX AND HAVE FUN READING. I REALLY HOPE YOU'RE GETTING EXCITED ABOUT THE STORY! I'M GOING TO DRINK MY MILK AND DO MY BEST. (EVEN IF IT JUST MAKES MY BONES THICKER...)

I WOULD BE HONORED IF WE MET AGAIN SOMEDAY IN THE NEXT VOLUME!

I HOPE THIS WON'T TURN OUT TO BE A FAREWELL HAIKU...

HELLO, AND NICE TO MEET YOU! I'M THE WRITER, HANJIROU TSUKIOKA.

I'M SUCH A FAILURE AT THIS, BUT...PLEASE KEEP READING ANYWAY! (;_;)




## Special thanks

■ Staff ■

BISON-SAMA
MUMIMU-SAMA
KANEDA-SAMA
TOYOKURA AKINO-SAMA
OUR MANAGER, S-SAMA
MY DAD, MOM, AND CAT
AZ-(KAMI)SAMA
ENZAN NO KINSAN
DONKI-SAMA
OUR LOVELY ASSISTANT/CATERER
OUR BOSS
AYU-SAMA
EMI-SAMA

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

tanaka
2013.11.22

TSUKIOKA
2013.11.22

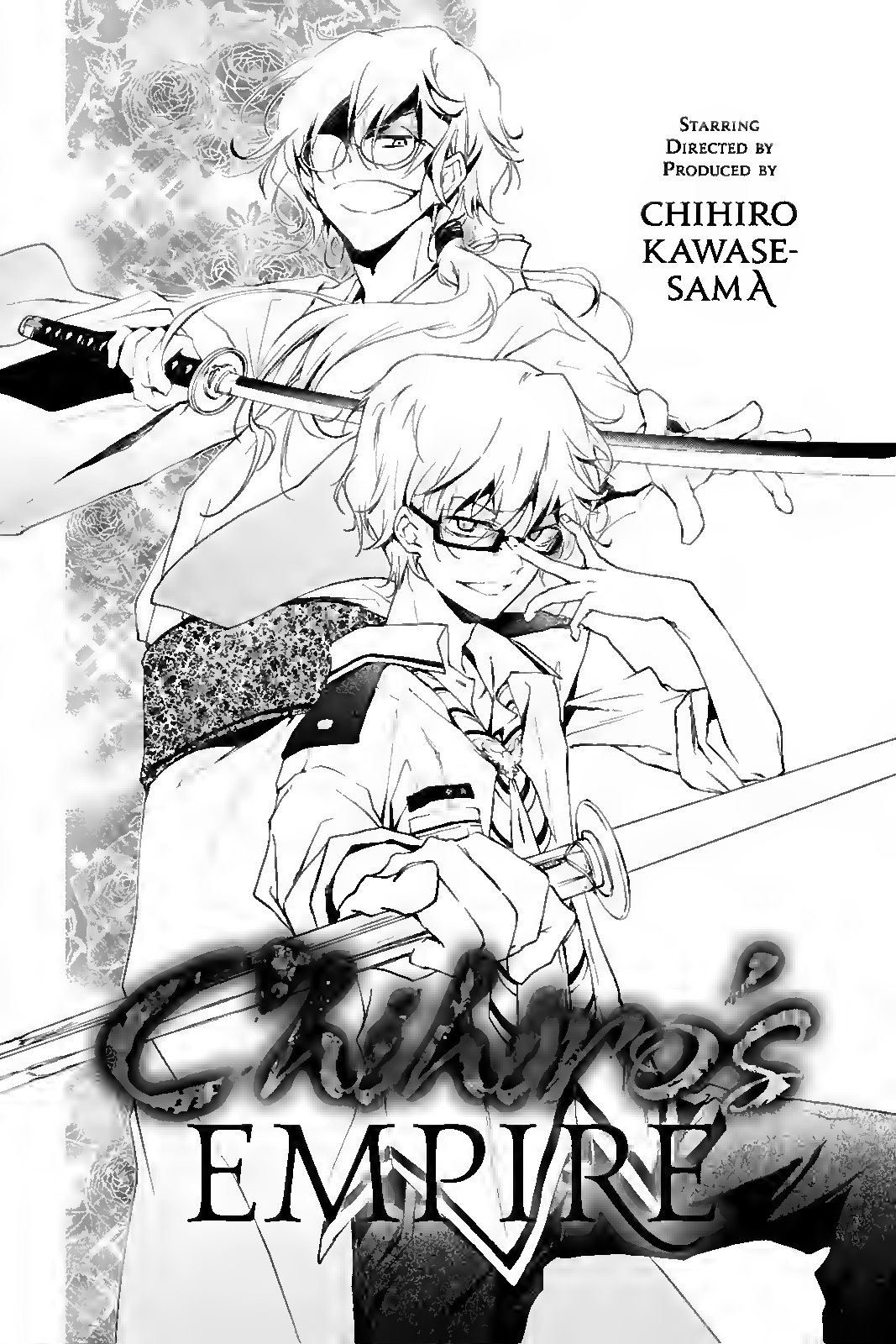
## and you!!

We love getting mail with your thoughts and reactions!

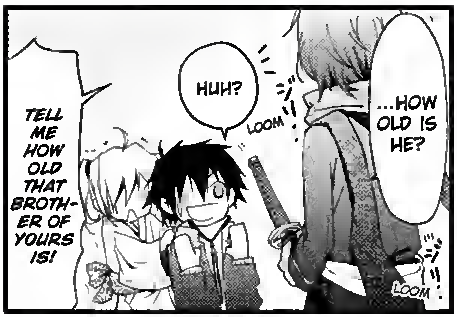
Address letters to:
Hanjirou Tsukioka or Hikaru Tanaka
c/o Yen Press
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

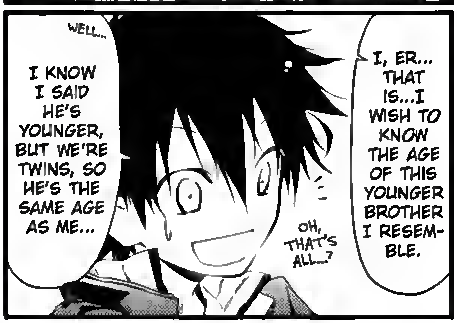
KYOUMA SAKAMOTO, A HERO OF THE BAKUMATSU. WILL HISTORY SPARE HIS LIFE—OR ROB HIM OF IT? AS THE SCENE SHIFTS TO KYOTO, OUR WARRIORS WILL FORGE SCARLET BONDS AND CLASH WITH A PACK OF WOLVES WHO FLY A PALE BLUE BANNER...!

VOLUME 2 ON SALE NOW!

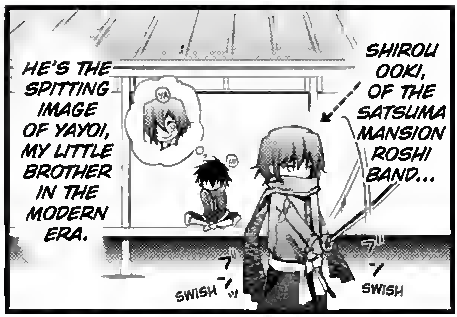

STARRING
DIRECTED BY
PRODUCED BY
CHIHIRO KAWASE-SAMA
CHIHIRO'S EMPIRE

# Torpedo





WELL...
I KNOW I SAID HE'S YOUNGER, BUT WE'RE TWINS, SO HE'S THE SAME AGE AS ME...
OH, THAT'S ALL...?
I, ER... THAT IS...I WISH TO KNOW THE AGE OF THIS YOUNGER BROTHER I RESEMBLE.

# Land Mine


HE'S THE SPITTING IMAGE OF YAYOI, MY LITTLE BROTHER IN THE MODERN ERA.
SHIROU OOKI, OF THE SATSUMA MANSION ROSHI BAND...
SWISH
SWISH

OH-HO! YOU MEAN THAT?
POP
WELL, MAINLY I JUST WANNA SEE YAYOI AGAIN..
HE'D LOOK JUST LIKE YAYOI THEN...
I WANNA TRY IT...
I WONDER, IF I COULD JUST PULL OFF THAT THING AROUND HIS NECK...
HE ALMOST NEVER TAKES IT OFF IN FRONT OF OTHER PEOPLE!
EXCEPT IN THE BATH AND STUFF
WHY THE LONG FACE?

KOTE-CHAN! BEHIND YOU! BEHIND YOUUU!!
KSHING
SO HE'S JUST TOUCHY ABOUT HAVING SUCH A BABY FACE, HUH?
I GUESS I'M LIKE THAT ABOUT MY HEIGHT...

AND THE CHASE WAS ON.

# GLOSSARY

COMMON HONORIFICS

no honorific: Indicates familiarity or closeness; if used without permission or reason, addressing someone in this manner would constitute an insult.

*-san*: The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.

*-sama*: Conveys great respect; may also indicate that the social status of the speaker is lower than that of the addressee.

*-kun*: Used most often when referring to boys, this indicates affection or familiarity. Occasionally used by older men among their peers, but it may also be used by anyone referring to a person of lower standing.

*-chan*: An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals of either gender.

*-sensei*: A respectful term for teachers, artists, or high-level professionals.

*-niisan, nii-san*: A term of endearment meaning "big brother" that may be more widely used to address any young man who is like a brother, regardless of whether he is related or not.

*Bakumatsu*: The final years of the Tokugawa shogunate (1853–1868).

*Degote*: (Kendo) A move in which the attacker makes a swift lunge forward and strikes their opponent's kote (glove).

*Edo period*: The period between 1603 and 1868, when Japan was under the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate. Also known as the Tokugawa period.

*Hajime*: (Kendo) "Begin!" The referee call to begin a kendo match.

*Kote*: (Kendo) The padded gloves worn during matches, as well as a scoring strike to the gloves.

*Men*: (Kendo) The masked helmet worn during matches, as well as a scoring strike to the mask.

*Mon*: An old form of Japanese currency, predating the yen. The smallest coin in use during the Bakumatsu.

*Roshi*: A samurai without a liege lord. Considered socially inferior. (Also known as a "*ronin*.")

*Ryo*: An old form of Japanese currency, predating the yen. Equivalent to 4,000 mon.

*Sashimen*: (Kendo) A move in which the attacker strikes their opponent's *men* (mask) with a sudden thrust or stabbing motion, instead of the more typical slice downward. Considered slightly unsporting.

*Shinai*: (Kendo) A bamboo practice sword held together with leather and string.

*Tachi*: A long Japanese sword. More old-fashioned in style than a katana.

*Wakizashi*: A short Japanese sword, traditionally worn paired with a longer blade like a katana or a tachi.

*Edo Wonderland*: An Edo period theme park in Nikko, Japan.

# SCARLET EMPIRE 1

Hanjirou Tsukioka
Hikaru Tanaka

Translation: Arijan Clark

Lettering: Xian Michele Lee

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

SCARLET EMPIRE Volume 1 ©2013 Hanjirou Tsukioka, Hikaru Tanaka/SQUARE ENIX CO., LTO. First published in Japan in 2013 by SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. English translation rights arranged with SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD. and Hachette Book Group through Tuttle-Mori Agency, Inc., Tokyo.

Translation ©2015 by SQUARE ENIX CO., LTD.

All rights reserved. In accordance with the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976, the scanning, uploading, and electronic sharing of any part of this book without the permission of the publisher is unlawful piracy and theft of the author's intellectual property. If you would like to use material from the book (other than for review purposes), prior written permission must be obtained by contacting the publisher at permissions@hbgusa.com. Thank you for your support of the author's rights.

Yen Press
Hachette Book Group
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

www.hachettebookgroup.com
www.yenpress.com

Yen Press is an imprint of Hachette Book Group, Inc.
The Yen Press name and logo are trademarks of Hachette Book Group, Inc.

The publisher is not responsible for websites (or their content) that are not owned by the publisher.

First Yen Press ebook Edition: November 2015

ebook ISBN: 978-0-316-35490-5

App ISBN: 978-0-316-35491-2